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Dr. L E L A N D's
H I S T O R Y
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I R E L A N D.

I N F O U R V O L U M E S.

V O L. I.

THE
HISTORY
OF
IRELAND
FROM THE
INVASION OF HENRY II.
WITH A
PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE
ON THE
ANTIEN STATE OF THAT KINGDOM.

By THOMAS LELAND, D.D.
Senior Fellow of Trinity College, and Prebendary of St. Patrick's, DUBLIN.

VOL. I.

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AND JOHN DUNLAP.
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PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE.

THE subject of the following history seems not unworthy of attention. A British reader may esteem it neither useless nor uninteresting, to trace the progress of the English power in IRELAND, from the invasion of Henry the Second, through the conflicts of many ages, short intervals of peace, the sudden revival of hostilities, the suppression of civil war, the attempts to compose all national disorders, and the final contest in the cause of James the Second. It is a subject which comes recommended at least by the merit of novelty; for, although particular periods of these affairs have been treated, sometimes imperfectly, sometimes copiously, yet no general and connected history hath yet appeared of those actions, counsels, incidents, and revolutions, which ended in establishing the authority of the crown of England, in a country, now, a respectable member of the British empire.

AT the REVOLUTION, indeed, the favour and patronage of government encouraged Sir Richard Cox to such an attempt. But, however assiduous in his researches, he produced nothing better than an hasty, indigested, and imperfect Chronicle, ending with the final suppression of the rebellion commenced in the year one thousand six hundred and forty-one. More than fourscore years have elapsed since the last commotions of Ireland; during this interval it hath made successful advances in refinement and literature; and the descendants of the English settlers in this country seem to have had both leisure and inducement, to record those actions in which their ancestors took so considerable a part. But men of letters thought, perhaps, too meanly of the subject; they were deterred by the darkness in which some periods were involved; by the painful and disgusting pursuit of materials not yet disclosed, or not yet wrought into any regular narrative; or by the labour of selection from writers, who viewed their favourite object with an eye too partial, and detailed every incident, with an oppressing minuteness.

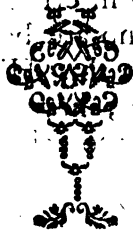
BUT the circumstances of Ireland were a still more dispiriting obstacle to the historian of this country. Prejudices and animosities could not end with its disorders. The relations of every transaction in times of contest and turbulence, were for many years dictated by pride, by resentment, by the virulence of faction, by the obliquity of particular interests and competitions. It was scarcely possible for a writer not to share in the passions and prejudices of those around him: or, however candid,

did, dispassionate, and accurate, still he must have done dangerous violence to their opinions and prepossessions. Time, and reflection, and an encreasing liberality of sentiment, may have sheathed the acrimony of contending parties; and those at a distance may look on their contentions with indifference: yet, even at this day, the historian of Irish affairs must be armed against censure only by an integrity which confines him to truth, and a literary courage which despises every charge but that of wilful or careless misrepresentation.

In several instances the author may have stated facts in a manner, different from those writers usually accepted as authentic. Had he in such cases proceeded to a particular examination of the opinions and assertions of other men; had he entered into a justification of his own accounts, or specified the reasons which determined him to reject or to admit every particular authority, his work must have swelled to an enormous size. He was, therefore, obliged to content himself with a diligent and attentive inspection of different evidence, with a careful use of his private judgment, with exhibiting the authorities he chose to follow, without generally engaging in critical and controversial discussions. They who are best acquainted with the materials of which this History, and particularly the later periods, have been formed, will possibly be the readiest to acknowledge the necessity of this method.

It will justly be expected, that something should be said of the ancient state of Ireland previous to the adventure of Henry's subjects. But in this the author must confine himself to those particulars

particulars which seem necessary to introduce, or to illustrate his principal subject. It is no part of his design to explore the antiquities of the Irish, to decide on the authenticity of their scattered records, or to take any share in any contest relative to these points. He is particularly disqualified for such attempts, by being totally unacquainted with the Irish language. In recurring to the monkish annals quoted in the first and second volumes, he was indebted to translations made for the use of Sir James Ware, and in possession of the UNIVERSITY of Dublin; to the collections, now the property of the DUBLIN SOCIETY, and most obligingly communicated by that respectable body; but above all, to the zealous friendship and assistance of CHARLES O'CONNOR, esquire. And here he might enlarge on the assistance he hath received, and the materials obtained both in England and Ireland. But as such details may be suspected to contain more of ostentation than gratitude, the reader shall not be detained from that which seems of absolute necessity to be premised.



HISTORY OF IRELAND

PREVIOUS TO THE

INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY,

IF all nations have affected to deduce their History from the earliest periods, and to claim that origin which they deemed most honourable, the old Irish have been particularly tempted to indulge this vanity. Depressed for many ages, and reduced to a mortifying state of inferiority, stung with the reproaches, with the contempt, and sometimes with the injurious slander of their neighbours, they passionately resorted to the monuments of their ancient glory, and spoke of the noble actions of their ancestors in the glowing style of indignation. O'Flaherty, their celebrated antiquarian, (in a vindication of his Ogygia against Sir George Mackenzie, which I have seen in manuscript) speaks with an enthusiastic zeal of his country, as the venerable mother of Britain, "that engendered of her own bowels one hundred and seventy-one monarchs for above two thousand years, to the year 1198, all of the same house and lineage; with sixty-eight kings and one queen of British-Scotland; (omitting Bruces and Baliols) and four imperial kings and two queens of Great-Britain and Ireland, sprung from her own loins." In the reign of Edward the Second, the Irish claimed a still greater

greater antiquity. An Ulster prince of this time^r, boasts to the pope of an uninterrupted succession of one hundred and ninety-seven kings of Ireland, to the year 1170.

It cannot be denied, that no literary monuments have yet been discovered in Ireland earlier than the introduction of Christianity into this country; and that the evidence of any transactions previous to this period, rest, entirely on the credit of Christian writers, and their collections from old poets, or their transcripts of records deemed to have been made in times of paganism. It seems unreasonable to expect, that any other domestic evidence of Irish antiquity should subsist at this day. From these the antiquarian forms a regular history, (mixed indeed with childish and absurd fables) of a long succession of kings from the earlier ages of the world. Not to mention Partholan, his sons, his hound, and oxen; the gigantic Formorians and their extirpation; the Nemedians, Firbolgs, Tuatha-de-Danans and their sorceries; it is generally asserted, that about a thousand, or to speak with the more moderate, about five hundred years before the christian æra, a colony of Scythians, immediately from Spain, settled in Ireland, and introduced the Phœnician language and letters into this country; and that however it might have been peopled still earlier from Gaul or Britain, yet Heber, Heremon, and Ith, the sons of Milesius, gave a race of kings to the Irish, distinguished from their days by the names of Gadelians and Scuits, or Scots. Hence their writers trace a gradual refinement of their country, from a state of barbarous feuds, factions, and competitions;

tions ; until the monarch celebrated in their annals by the name of Ollam-Fodla, established a regular form of government, erected a grand seminary of learning, and instituted the Fés, or triennial convention of provincial kings, priests, and poets, at Teamor, or Tarah, in Meath, for the establishment of laws and regulation of government. Keating, the Irish historian, who transcribed his accounts from poetical records, mentioned little more of this boasted assembly, than that its great object was to introduce civility, and to guard against those crimes which predominate in days of rudeness and violence. The magnificent detail of its grandeur and solemnity, the scrupulous attention paid by its members to the national history, annals, and genealogies, are nothing more, (as I am assured) than the interpolations of an ignorant and presumptuous translator.

BUT whatever were the Institutions of this monarch, it is acknowledged that they soon proved too weak for the wildness and disorder of the time. To Kimbath, one of his Successors, the annalists gave the honour of reviving them, besides that of regulating Ulster, his family province, and adorning it by the stately palace of Eamania, erected near Armagh. But Hugony immediate successor to Kimbath is celebrated for still farther advances in the work of reformation. He is described as a monarch powerful by sea and land, and equally distinguished by his political abilities. Of five provincial kings, four, we are told, had ever proved the most pertinacious disturbers of the fifth who enjoyed the monarchy. To break the power of these rivals, Hugony parcelled the island into twenty-five dynasties, binding them

by oath to accept no other monarch but one of his own family. Yet such precaution, it seems, could not secure him from a violent death, nor prevent a series of assassinations, by which the monarchs were for ages removed, scarcely with one exception.

THE restoration of the pentarchal government is dated about a century before the Christian era, and is said to have been succeeded by a political revolution of some importance. Among the other powers and privileges of the Irish fleas or chads, they had been for ages dispensers of the laws, and the whole nation submitted to their tribunals. Their honours were considerable, their numbers prodigious, and in a course of ages they naturally abused their power. Their ordinances were affectedly obscured, and could only be interpreted by themselves; their decisions were frequently partial and unjust, the people grew impatient of their oppression, and threatened to exterminate the whole order. They fled for shelter to Con-covar-Mac-Neffa the reigning monarch. On promise of reformation he protected them from the impending danger. At the same time, to remove the just complaints of his people, he employed the most eminent among them to compile an intelligible, clear, and equitable body of laws, which were received with rapture, and called, in the elevated language of an unpolished age, CELESTIAL DECISIONS.

INSTEAD of the effects naturally to be expected from sage counsels, and patriotic institutions, the annalists now present us with a new series of barbarities,

barities, successions precipitated by murder, factions, anarchy, and seditions. In this disordered state of things, we are told, that the Irish chieftain, mentioned by Tacitus, addressed himself to Agricola, and encouraged him to make a descent on Ireland. But, instead of subscribing to the opinion, that a single legion and a few auxiliaries would be sufficient to reduce the whole island, the Irish historian considers the suggestion as utterly extravagant, even in the present unsettled state of his country, and records with triumph, that the Irish monarch of this time, instead of dreading an invasion of the Romans, sailed to the assistance of the Picts, led an irruption into the Roman province, and returned in triumph laden with foreign spoils.

On the death of this prince, called Crimthan, the annalists lament that the succession of the line of Heremon to the monarchy was interrupted; that the old Firbolgs, or Belgian inhabitants, grew so powerful and turbulent as to establish a monarchy of their own race, and to harass the country for many years, (with some short intervals) by the plebeian, or Attacotic war, as it was called. We are told, that at length, Tuathal, a prince of the Milesian family, returned from North Britain with some Pictish auxiliaries, and vindicated the honour of his house; that he assembled the general convention at Tarah, was recognized supreme monarch, and obliged his subjects by a solemn oath to elect their future sovereigns from his family; that he separated the district of Meath from the other provinces of Ireland, and appointed it for the appenage of the monarch: that he adorned it

it with stately edifices ; and that he established, or at least revived a famous assembly at Taltion in Meath^e, the great resort of the whole nation, for the purposes of traffic, sports, and social intercourse.

THE provincial king of Leinster is said to have provoked this monarch by an act of singular perfidy. He had married the daughter of Tuathal ; but, conceiving an adulterous passion for her sister, pretended that his wife had died ; and demanded, and obtained her sister in marriage. The two ladies met in the royal house of Leinster : astonishment and vexation put an end to their lives : the monarch invaded his son-in-law, whose province was preserved from desolation, only on condition of paying a grievous tribute, as a perpetual memorial of the resentment of Tuathal, and the offence committed by the king of Leinster. To the exaction of this odious and oppressive tribute are ascribed the commotions and disorders of ages. Conn, one of the succeeding monarchs, is said to have lived in perpetual turbulence, and with a variety of fortune, by his attempts to enforce the payment of it ; and at length to have been driven to a partition of the monarchy with the prince of Munster, contenting himself with the northern moiety, called Leath-Conn, while his rival enjoyed the southern, styled Leath-Mogha. But he recovered his former power, by surprising and killing the Munster prince. Conn too died by violence with the superb title of CONN OF THE HUNDRED BATTLES.

CORMAC

c Keating.

CORMAC O'CONN, grandson of this hero, is said to be the most renowned of all the pagan monarchs. The annalists date the commencement of his reign about the year of Christ 254. They speak with rapture of the splendour and magnificence of his court, his three warlike sons, his ten beauteous daughters, his guards, his palaces, his formidable militia, and their illustrious general Finn, the son of Cumhal, and father of Oisfian the immortal bard ; his revision of the laws, and endowments of learned seminaries, his triumph over his rebellious subjects, the resignation of his dignity, and his philosophical retreat.

THE effects of an education received from such a father are said to have been honourably displayed in the conduct of his son Carbry-Liffecar. But the wisdom and policy of these princes, we are told, could not stem the torrent of domestic strife and national factions. Carbry died by the sword : his immediate successors shared the same fate ; and even those, who contrived to hold the sceptre for many years, at length fell by treachery or war. The contests of the unjust and ambitious laid the country waste ; and the stately palace of Eamania was destroyed by flames. Crimthan, who carried his arms into Gaul and Britain, died by poison : and NIAL OF THE NINE HOSTAGES, after his brave enterprize in support of the Albanian Dalraida, and his successes in Armorica, fell by the hand of an assassin. To Dathy, his successor, and the last of pagan monarchs, annalists assign a long and peaceful reign, till at length, engaging in foreign wars, he was killed by lightning near the Alps.

FROM the poetical annals that furnish this catalogue of monarchs, we have a lively picture of manners, more worthy of attention than the events which they deliver with so profuse a mixture of giants, necromancers, obscure allegories and extravagant fables. They describe a brave people, driven from their native land in search of new settlements, establishing themselves by their valour in a fair and fertile island : the chieftains parcelling out lands to their attendants, and the whole collection of adventurers, from the moment of their peaceable establishment, devising means to give stability to their acquisitions. From one family more distinguished and revered than the rest, they chuse a monarch, not with that regard to primogeniture suited to times more composed, but the ablest and bravest of the particular race, as the man most likely to protect or to avenge them. To guard against the confusion of sudden accidents in a time of violence, a successor is appointed to this monarch during his life, who on his demise is instantly to take the reins of government. But the power of the monarch is considerably limited. His associates in adventure, conscious of their own merit, claim a share of dignity as well as of emolument. They pay their tributes to that provincial king whom they chuse monarch of the island. In the other provinces they exercise all regal authority by virtue of a similar election. They have their rights independent of the monarch, and frequently vindicate them by arms against his invasions. The monarch, sensible of the danger arising from their surbulent spirit of freedom, endeavours to secure his authority, sometimes by dividing their power, sometimes by uniting the various independent states into one general interest by national conventions.

tions. In this state of things, a robust frame of body, a vehemence of passion, an elevated imagination were the characteristics of the people. Noble instances of valour, generous effusions of benevolence, ardent resentments, desperate and vindictive outrages abound in their annals. To verse and music they are peculiarly addicted. They who are possessed of any superiour degree of knowledge, they who operate on their fancies and passions by the liveliest strains of poetry, are held in extraordinary veneration: the ministers of their religion are accounted more than human. To all these they submit their contests; they consult them as oracles of law and policy. But reflection and the gradual progress of refinement convince them of the necessity of settled laws. The principles of equity and independence implanted in the human breast receive them with delight; but the violence of passion still proves superiour to their restraint. Private injuries are revenged by force; and insolent and ambitious chieftains still recur to arms.

THEY who compare this account with the progress of society in other European settlements may decide on the justness of this colouring. The Irish antiquarian deduces from it an intrinsic proof of the general authenticity of his favourite annals. Even from the idle tales of enchantments and supernatural events, a late advocate labours to prove their high antiquity. "Into this story," faith doctor Warner^a, speaking of a particular engagement, "there is foisted a very wonderful tale of the skill and enchantments of the Druids in each army; in order, no doubt, to possess their
VOL. I. b "countrymen

^a Warner, History of Ireland. p. 244.

“ countrymen with an high opinion and esteem of
 “ the power and importance of their holy leaders,
 “ as well as to enliven the history with wonder
 “ and surprize. At the same time therefore that
 “ we acquit the bard who invented it in that age
 “ of darkness and superstition, we must condemn
 “ doctor Keating, who relates it to us in these
 “ days for serious history. Indeed his relating it
 “ to us from the ancient records has answered one
 “ end, for which we ought to forgive him : it has
 “ furnished us with a proof from the history of
 “ Ireland itself, of the antiquity of that history,
 “ and of the existence of letters before the intro-
 “ duction of Christianity. For though in the
 “ time of Druidism it was natural to take every
 “ opportunity of displaying the power of that
 “ order, yet this was absurd and inconsistent in
 “ Christian annalists, and could not therefore be
 “ foisted in by them ; nor the history be the
 “ production of later ages, as our candid critics
 “ all seem to contend.”

BUT to the antiquarian I leave it to establish
 the authenticity of this history. It is only per-
 tinent to my present purpose to observe, that if
 we suppose that the old poets were merely inventors
 of this whole series of actions and incidents so cir-
 cumstantially detailed, still they must have drawn
 their picture from that government and those
 manners, which subsisted in their own days, or
 were remembered by their fathers. So that we
 may reasonably conclude, that the state of Ireland
 for several centuries at least before the introduction
 of the English power, was such as they describe
 it in these early periods, And this is the only
 conclusion which I am concerned to establish.

OF THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF CHRISTIANITY
IN
I R E L A N D,
AND THE
CONSEQUENCES OF THIS EVENT.

THE conversion of the Irish to Christianity is generally considered as a new period, whence we may trace their history with more certainty ; though we still find it encumbered with legendary and poetical fictions. The people were prepared for the preaching of Patrick their great apostle, by the gradual progress of the Gospel, by the labours of some former missionaries, and (if we may believe the old annalists) by the liberal and philosophical spirit of Cormac O'Conn, who first taught his subjects to despise the pagan rites. To him they principally attribute it, that the Druidical order, so ancient and so powerful, gradually declined in consequence ; though not extinct on the arrival of the great missionary ; for the most authentic records mention the name of a Druid, who violently opposed the introduction of Christianity, and warned the monarch of the heavy and oppressive taxations which the people must suffer from the new religious establishment.

PATRICK, say the adversaries of Irish antiquity, laid the foundation of civility in this barbarous country, by teaching the use of letters to its ignorant inhabitants. Patrick, say the advocates for this antiquity, introduced the Roman character, in which his copies of the scriptures and Liturgies were written, and in which the new Irish converts transcribed the Sacred Writings, with such ease and expedition as were impossible for unlettered men. They remind us, that Fiach, to whom Patrick first delivered the new character, was the disciple of Dubthach-O'Lugair, an illustrious poet, who some time before, had sent his pupil into Connaught, to present some of his compositions to the princes of this country. But they proceed yet farther: for, not to mention their accounts of the Ogham, their ancient or cryptic character, or their arguments from the number, the arrangement, the names of the Irish letters, or Beth-luis-nion, they furnished Sir James Ware with a long catalogue of writers in the days of paganism, from Amergin brother to Heber and Heremon.

ARCHBISHOP USHER has shewn that the system of doctrines taught by Patrick were free from the erroneous novelties of the church of Rome. But pure as his preaching might be, the doctrines of the Gospel, which, if their influence be not fatally counteracted, tend to refine, harmonize, and elevate the human mind, do not appear to have been so deeply imbibed, or blended so thoroughly with the natural principles of the people, as to produce any extraordinary reformation of national manners. Even Leogaire the converted monarch, made an unchristian attack on Leinster, was de-
feated

feated, and by a solemn oath renounced the old tribute which had been the pretence of quarrel. Yet no sooner had he returned to his own territory, and reassembled his forces, than, with a shocking defiance of his sacred obligation, he again rushed into the province with fire and sword. It is true the monastic annalists, scandalized at this conduct, tell us, that Leogaire apostatized after his baptism. The fact, if admitted, only exhibits a notable instance, in which an inveterate corruption of manners proved too powerful for the preachers of Christianity, even when its doctrine had been embraced and professed. And for ages after the death of this monarch, the annals abound in horrid instances of revenge, and hideous effects of avarice and ambition. Yet Christianity, as then taught, although it could not eradicate, at least restrained the national vices. A numerous body of ecclesiastics secular and regular, quickly swarmed over the whole country, frequently became umpires between contending chieftains; and when they could not confine them within the bounds of reason and religion, at least terrified them by denouncing divine vengeance against their excesses. An ignorant people listened to their tales of pretended miracles with a religious horror. In the midst of every provincial contest and every domestic strife, they were sacred and inviolate. They soon learned to derive their own emolument from the public veneration. The infant church was every where amply endowed, and the prayers of holy men repaid by large donations. Some of the oldest remains of Irish literature, as they have been explained to me, inform us, that the people were taught to dedicate the first born of all cattle to the church,

church, as a matter of indispensable obligation. But if the clergy thus acquired riches, they applied them to the noblest purposes.

“THE Monks,” saith Mr. O’Connor, “fixed their habitations in deserts, which they cultivated with their own hands, and rendered the most delightful spots in the kingdom”. These deserts became well-policed cities; and it is remarkable enough, that to the Monks we owe so useful an institution in Ireland, as bringing great numbers together into one civil community.—In these cities the Monks set up schools, in which they educated the youth not only of the island but the neighbouring nations.” The testimony of Bede is unquestionable, that about the middle of the seventh century, in the days of the venerable prelates Finian and Colman, many nobles and other orders of the Anglo-Saxons, retired from their own country into Ireland, either for instruction, or for an opportunity of living in monasteries of stricter discipline: and that the Scots (as he styles the Irish) maintained them, taught them, and furnished them with books, without fee or reward: “A most honourable testimony,” saith the elegant lord LYTTLETON, “not only to the learning, but likewise to the hospitality and bounty of that nation!” A conflux of foreigners to a retired island, at a time when Europe was in ignorance and confusion, gave peculiar lustre to this seat of learning: nor is it improbable or surprising, that seven thousand students studied at Armagh, agreeably to the accounts of Irish writers, though the seminary of Armagh was but one of those numerous colleges erected in Ireland.

BUT

BUT the labours of the Irish clergy were not confined to their own country. Their missionaries were sent to the continent. They converted heathens, they confirmed believers, they erected convents, they established schools of learning ; they taught the use of letters to the Saxons and Normans, they converted the Picts by the preaching of Columbkille, one of their renowned ecclesiastics : Burgundy, Germany, and other countries received their instructions : and Europe with gratitude confessed the superior knowledge, the piety, the zeal, the purity of the ISLAND OF SAINTS. Such are the events on which Irish writers dwell with an enthusiastic delight.

THE first Christian missionaries seem to have industriously avoided all unnecessary violence to the ancient manners of the Irish. Their poets they favoured and protected ; the remains of the Druidical order were not persecuted ; and although divine vengeance was thundered against the worshippers of the sun, stars, and winds, it is evident, that some pagan superstitions were overlooked with too great indulgence ; for they subsist at this day in Ireland : fires are lighted up at particular times, and the more ignorant Irish still drive their cattle through these fires, as an effectual means of preserving them from future accidents.

WHATEVER were the civil establishments in Ireland on the introduction of Christianity, the first missionaries attempted no essential alterations. " They thought," saith Mr. O'Connor, " that schemes of political legislation belonged properly to the civil power alone." Possibly their genius was too confined, and possibly they were too much absorbed

absorbed in the immediate business of their mission to entertain such schemes. The written laws, however, if the Irish had any written laws, were in several points necessarily to be accommodated to the new religious establishment. Accordingly we are told that, on the first reception of Christianity, Patrick was one of nine persons^r, kings, bards, and ecclesiastics, appointed to revive the ordinances of pagan times, and to form a new code of laws; that the code was formed, published, and known to posterity by the name of SEANCHAS-MOIR, or the great Antiquity.

ENGLISH writers treat the idea of written laws^s, or any settled jurisprudence among the old Irish, as merely chimerical. Sir Richard Cox is positive that the nation never had any written compilation of laws, or any other rule of right but the will of a chieftain, or the arbitrary decisions of his BREHON or Judge, who sat without formality in the open air; and attended only to the will of his patron. Sir John Davis, a still greater authority, declares that the Brehons gave judgment in all causes, “with the assistance of certain scholars, who had learned many rules of the civil and canon law, rather by tradition than by reading.

IN opposition to such unfavourable representations, and to the opprobrious name of “Gens “Exlex” by which Giraldus Cambrensis marks the old Irish, their writers quote the authority of Joceline, who asserts, “Particium, magnum “volumen, quod dicitur Canoin-Padruig five “canones Patricii, scripsisse, quod cuilibet per-
“sonæ

^r O'Connor, Dissert. Fragments of Brehon Law.

^s Cox, History of Ireland, Preface. Davis Discoveries.

“sonæ seu seculari, seu etiam ecclesiasticæ ad
 “justitiam exercendam, & salutem obtinendam,
 “satis congrue convenit;” they produce the
 testimony of Saint Bernard, who, in his encomium
 on Malachy the Irish saint, says expressly, “Omni-
 “bus tradebat jura ecclesiastica, optimus legislator,
 “leges dabat plenas modestiæ & honestatis.—
 “Repetuntur antiquæ consuetudines quas bonas
 “fuisse constitit; nec modo vetera restaurantur :
 “cuduntur & nova:” and still farther, they testify
 that several collections of the old Irish laws existed
 in their own days. The author of Cambrensis
 Eversus declares, that he saw many large volumes
 of these laws on vellum, the text in a larger, the
 comment in a smaller writing. “Vidi ego plura e
 “pergameno spissa legum Hibernicarum volumina,
 “& in illis textum caractere grandiori conscrip-
 “tum, lineis modice disjunctis, faciliori vocum
 “interpretatione minutioribus literis insertâ.
 “Uberiora commentaria per paginam diffusa
 “textum obibant, eâdem omnino ratione, qua
 “textum and glossam in libris utriusque juris
 “aspicimus.” “I have thirty books of our law,”
 saith Roddy, another Irish antiquarian, “although
 “my honoured friend Sir Richard Cox was once
 “of opinion that our law was arbitrary, and not
 “fixed or written, until I convinced him of the
 “contrary by SHEWING him some of our old law-
 “books.”

WE may observe that neither Lynch in his
 refutations of Cambrensis, nor this Roddy the
 collector of Irish books, says one word of having
 read or examined these tracts; nor attempts to
 give any account of their contents. The one
 only *saw* them; the other only *shewed* them; but

neither

neither understood these books. Lluyd the antiquarian saw them, and to him they were equally unintelligible; but with more ingenuousness he confesses his ignorance, and in a postscript to the preface of his Irish Dictionary, copies a passage from his old parchments as a specimen of ancient Irish, which he cannot explain, and of which he requests an interpretation from any gentleman of Ireland or Scotland. Two volumes of old Irish manuscripts, which appear to have been part of Mr. Lluyd's collection, and one of which contains the passage he extracted, were communicated to me in London, by Edmund Burke, Esq; and conveyed to Ireland. They contain tracts apparently judicial; as the text, comment, and glossary precisely correspond with the description of Lynch. They were pronounced by readers of the Irish language to be fragments of the Seanchas-Moir compiled by Patrick, or rather much earlier, by some pagan legislator: they were acknowledged to be written in a dialect different from that of their poets and annalists; and such, as they who studied these poets and annalists, could not explain. They were indeed discouraged from the attempt, not only by the difficulties of an obsolete language, but by a strange confusion and incoherence which appeared in these writings even where the words were intelligible. It was suspected, that this arose from an affectation of obscurity. But a more natural solution of the difficulty hath been just now given. Charles Vallancey, Esq; a native of England, by a laborious attention to the ancient language of Ireland, had gained a knowledge of it, surprising to those natives who made it

it the great object of their study. To him I communicated these old manuscripts, and he claims the merit of first explaining them, and has obligingly furnished me with translations and copious extracts of the ancient Irish laws, contained in these books, and another of the same kind in the library of Trinity College Dublin. A considerable part of the difficulty which Mr. Lluyd and other inspectors of these books hitherto experienced, arose, it seems, from not adverting to the proper method of reading them; as they are written in the manner well known to the Grecian antiquary by the name of **BOUSTROPHEDON**. The unusual inversion of lines occasioned the apparent incoherence and confusion above-mentioned. When this circumstance was once pointed out, the difficulties arising from an obsolete language appeared not so considerable.

THE laws thus discovered appear to be no part of the great code or *Seanchas-Moir* said to be framed in the days of Patrick, but of a date considerably later. The *Seanchas-Moir* is frequently quoted both in the text and comment, as also another old code called the laws of Ulster, which the learned Irish claim to have been made in the house of Eamania, long before the preaching of their great apostle. In one place it is ordained, that in a particular case, when the property of lands is disputed, the **UNANIMOUS** voices of **TWELVE** men shall decide the controversy. Hence it was inferred by those, who only understood the translation, that these Irish laws were nothing more than the local ordinances of some Brehon, who had copied from the legal proceedings of his neighbours, the English settlers. But such inferences

rences were immediately encountered by an appeal to the style of these remains ; which is said, both in the text and comment, (evidently written at different periods) to be as distinguishable from the Irish of the twelfth or thirteenth century, as the language of Chaucer and Spenser from the compositions of present times. And indeed the matter of these laws seems to bear strong internal marks of antiquity. They never once mention foreigners or foreign septs settled in Ireland. They abound in regulations for bartering goods ; they rate all payments and amerciaments by cattle and other commodities, in the place of which the comment, as if in compliance with a change of manners, substitutes gold and silver taken by weight ; they take not the least notice of coined money, which was introduced into Ireland by the Scandinavian invaders, and became common among the Irish septs soon after the settlement of the English. They mentioned the triennial assemblies, and convention at Taltion, and ordain that no debts shall be demanded or enforced by any legal proceedings during these meetings. Hence it seems not improbable that these fragments are part of a compilation of laws which, O'Flaherty tell us, were made by three brethren (whom he names) in the eighth century. But whenever they were made, or transcribed, they certainly exhibit a lively picture of the manners and customs of the Irish in early times, and serve to correct some errors of their own, as well as of English writers. The reader will excuse this digression ; as it is a necessary introduction to what appears proper to be mentioned under another head.

OF THE

ANCIENT MANNERS OF THE IRISH.

AND here I must again premise, that I cannot enter into a copious detail of every particular relative to the ancient manners of a people whose history still continues dark, doubtful, and deformed. I mean to confine myself principally to those particulars which may illustrate my immediate subject.

IF we enquire into the manners of the ancient Irish from English writers, we find their representations odious and disgusting: if from writers of their own race, they frequently break out into the most animated encomiums of their great ancestors. The one can scarcely allow them any virtue; the other, in their enthusiastic ardour, can scarcely discover the least imperfection in their laws, government, or manners. The historian of England sometimes regards them as the most detestable, and contemptible of the human race. The antiquary of Ireland raises them to an illustrious eminence, above all other European people. Yet, when we examine their records, without regard to legendary tales or poetic fictions, we find them, even in their most brilliant periods, advanced only to an imperfect civilization, a state which exhibits the most striking instances both of the virtues and the vices of humanity. We have already seen the more general divisions of the island; the princes of the several provinces; and the monarch chosen to preside over the whole collection of dynasties.

The dignity of this monarch was supported by tributes paid by inferiour princes, at least from the time that Meath ceased to be his peculiar appenage. They were paid in every kind of cattle, mantles, cloaths, and utensils, not as tributes of bondage say the old records, but as benevolences granted in return for the benefits of his laws and the benedictions of his clergy. Yet the number and quality of the tributes to be paid by every inferiour dynasty were accurately ascertained. The monarch on his part was bound to purchase the service and attachment of his inferiours, by large donations of kine, sheep, horses, swine, arms, mantles, drinking-cups, of which every chieftain claimed his particular portion, and in return was bound to entertain the monarch in his progress*, for a stated time, and to attend him for some certain days or months, and no longer, in his military expeditions.

SUCH is the account collected from an old Irish record called "the Book of Tributes." The obligations of the monarch and his subjects were mutual; each had their rights defined; and each lived in perpetual jealousy of the encroachments of the other. The factious easily devised pretences for with-holding tribute from the monarch; the monarch, in this case, could seek redress only by making war upon his subjects. If the presents demanded by every inferior prince were denied, delayed, or not exactly proportioned to his claims, he refused his services. The monarch was left to the resources of his hereditary province; and in the most dangerous emergencies was frequently without any army. Hence sudden revolutions, and

* The Christian clergy were particularly careful to inculcate this virtue of hospitality.

and tragical catastrophes, the effects of pride, ambition, and resentment. Even when the military service was performed, chieftains must have oftentimes marched to the field, with a secret indifference or distaste to the cause in which they were engaged; and these they easily contrived to propagate among their followers. Hence, in the hour of danger, they frequently fled on the first attack; of which we shall hereafter find several instances. Men, who at other times display such intrepidity, could scarcely yield with so much ease and apparent indifference, if they had not thought their interest and their honour totally unconcerned in the quarrel; if they had not been discontented with their leader; and their leader too weak to restrain or punish them. At least, this seems a more reasonable account of such appearances, than recurring to the charge of national cowardice, a vice scarcely to be expected among a rude and turbulent, though not a barbarous people. But if we suppose the collected forces of the monarch the most favourably affected to his interests, still an army, bound to serve only for a season, might prove sufficient for some short incursions into a rebellious province; but foreigners, who might pour gradually into Ireland for settlements, or conquest, were not to be exterminated by a temporary militia.

THE power and government of a provincial king were exactly similar to those of the monarch. His successor or Tainist was elected in his life-time; he received tributes from inferior chieftains, paid for their services, was entertained in his visitations and attended by them in his wars. Inferiour toparchs

toparchs governed their respective districts in the same manner: and to these again a number of lords were subordinate, who dwelt in their Rath, as they were called, or enclosures of a dwelling-house and offices; parcelled out lands to their inferiours, who again possessed their smaller Rath, and commanded a smaller number of dependents. In these petty societies we may view the manners of the Irish more distinctly. No man was bound to continue in them longer than he found it necessary for his interest. On his admission, he took the name of the chieftain or Flath as he was called; on his death, or departure, a new partition was made of all the lands belonging to the particular district, by virtue of the law of "Gavel-kind," as the English called it. Through the whole country the tenure of lands determined with the life of the possessor; and as the crimes or misfortunes of men frequently forced them from one tribe to another, property was eternally fluctuating; and new partitions of lands made almost daily. Hence, the cultivation of grounds was only in proportion to the immediate demands of nature, and the tributes to be paid to superiours. And whatever magnificent structures might have been erected for occasions of state, or for religious worship, it is certain that both Princes and people dwelt in houses slightly composed of hurdles.

AMONG a rude people, hospitality was a principal virtue. It was enjoined by law: and as neither Lords nor tenants were bound to each other, as the whole tribe might migrate to some more favourable district, the Brehon institutes expressly enjoin that no Rath shall break up suddenly, lest the

the traveller should be disappointed of his expected reception. But neither the duties to be received by the lord, nor the entertainment he was to expect from his inferiours, were determined by his arbitrary will and pleasure. They were proportioned to the benefits received from him, and ascertained by the laws : so that the lord could exact his *Coshering*, his *Cuddies*, his *Bonnaught*, names denoting particular modes of provision for the temporary support of himself and his attendants ; and which in later times were found so greivous, and so severely condemned, under the denominations of “ Coyne and livery.” Even the lowest of the people claimed reception and refreshment, by an almost perfect right : and so ineffectual is the flux of many centuries to efface the ancient manners of a people, that at this day the wandering beggar enters the house of a farmer or gentleman, with as much ease and freedom as an inmate. The benevolent spirit of Christianity served to enforce and countenance such manners. “ The most holy men of heaven,” say the Irish laws, “ were remarkable for hospitality ; and “ the Gospel commands us to receive the sojourner, “ to entertain him, and to relieve his wants.”

THESE laws not only provide against murder, rapes, adultery, theft, robbery ; but such crimes as are not generally cognizable by human tribunals ; such as slander, tale-bearing, or disrespect to superiours. But at this day it will not be regarded as a distinguishing mark of barbarity that the most outrageous offences were punishable only by an ERIC OF FINE. That for murder was to be paid by the perpetrator or his family, to the son, or relations of the deceased, and in proportion to their

degrees of consanguinity; that for adultery, to the husband of the offender, by her father or nearest relations; or, if a bond-woman, by the tribe which entertained her, or by the church which she served. The incestuous person not only paid his Eric, but was instantly expelled from his tribe. Nor could any man be admitted into a new tribe, until he had paid Eric for all offences whatever committed in his former residence. The fine paid to a son for the murder of his father was rated at seven *Cumbals*, as they were called, or twenty-one kine. Hence we may form a judgment of the lenity of their penal laws in other instances. The property and security of woods, the regulation of water-courses, but above all the property of bees, on which depended the principal beverage of the people, were guarded by a number of minute institutions, which breathe a spirit of equity and humanity. We are not to wonder that a people, accustomed to the refinements found in their own laws, should be pronounced of all others the greatest lovers of justice. This is the honourable testimony of sir John Davis and lord Coke. With shame we must confess, that they were not taught this love of justice by the first English settlers.

MORYSON, in his travels, informs us that an Irish chieftain with his family and attendants sat round his fire, naked. There is little doubt but that in the reign of Elizabeth, even the old natives had degenerated, and that the wars of several centuries had reduced them to a state inferior to that in which the English found them in the days of Henry the Second. Yet the fact is totally incredible. The climate of Ireland must at all times have forced the most barbarous to some covering,
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even in their retired chambers. Irish writers minutely describe the ancient dress of their country, the vest, the trowse, the mantle, the enormous linen sleeves dyed with saffron, the ornaments of their women, and the crowns of their kings. The fragments of their laws, an authority less suspicious, regulate the prices of dress for all orders and degrees; they ordain that wives who bring no dowry (including even queens) shall be restrained in the expence of their apparel; they ascertain the prices of needle-work, embroidery, and other ornaments. But if the women were attentive to adorn their persons, the men affected rather a war-like aspect: their thick beards, and great whiskers, their glibbs or bushy hair hanging careless over their visage, joined with an athletic body, gave them a fierce and even hideous appearance.

“THE songs of the bard,” saith lord Lyttleton, “had usually more power to incite and enflame, than the music of the harp to soften or mitigate the ferocity of the chief: so that even this recreation, which seems to indicate something gentle and approaching to politeness in the temper of the Irish, contributed to keep up that turbulent spirit, averse to order and peace, which no prince or legislator that their country ever produced had sufficient skill to controul.” The observation is fully verified by the history of this people.

OF all the customs of the Irish, that of FOSTERAGE, as it is called, hath been a particular subject of speculation. Their writers generally agree, that children were mutually given, from different families, to be nursed and bred up in others; and that inferiours, instead of expecting any reward for their care, purchased the honour of

fostering the children of the rich. Hence, we are told, a stricter connection and confederacy were formed between different families and different tribes. There is no doubt, but that children bred from their infancy together, in the same family, under the same parental care, in the same sports and occupations, with minds untainted by pride, and inattentive to worldly distinctions, considered each other as real brethren, and contracted warm affections, which time could not extinguish: that they regarded their fosterers with a filial reverence; and were oftentimes, through life, attended by the children of these fosterers with a zealous and steady attachment. But I cannot allow that fosterage was purposely devised by politicians to produce these effects, that there was a mutual exchange of children, or any mutual alliances intended or concerted by such an exchange. The Brehon laws seem to intimate, that fostering was the occupation of those whose inferiour condition rendered them incapable of doing other services to the public. "No man," say they, "shall in any case be entitled to ERIC, but he who pays tribute or FOSTERS: and in their injunctions on ALL orders of women, their expression is, from the queen to the FOSTERESS." So far are the fragments of these laws from favouring the notion that the honour of breeding children was ever purchased, that they are exact in ascertaining the wages that shall be paid to fosterers in proportion to the time that children continue under their care, and the instructions they have received: nor do they omit the prices which the several masters may demand from the appointments of a fosterer. And here they discover the secret of a complete Irish education;

cation ; at least for those of the middle ranks of life. The youth in his state of fosterage was not employed in a tedious and painful practice of various forms and measures of poetry, as we are sometimes told : the system of his education was more useful, and indeed more honourable. He was instructed in the management of cattle ; in husbandry and tillage ; in navigation, which the laws distinguish into the higher and lower, but without explaining the difference ; and lastly, in the knowledge of letters, or reading, as the lowest part of education.

IN a word, it appears from all their legal institutions yet discovered, that the Irish, in their state of greatest compofure, were indeed by no means barbarous, but far from that perfect civility which their enthusiastic admirers sometimes describe as their peculiar characteristic. They cultivated those arts of peace which subsist among a people strangers to extensive commerce, or the refinements of an opulent and luxurious age. Rights were accurately defined in their societies, and the people might have been impressed with an habitual love of justice ; but their sense of injuries was, in proportion, lively ; and their passions irritable. Redress, in many cases, was only to be obtained by force ; and to force they perpetually recurred. Their boasted triennial assemblies do not appear to have ever served the purpose of a strict and peaceable connection between the different inhabitants of a country, which for many ages had full leisure for improvement. The influence of their monarchs was weak ; their power neglected, controuled, and resisted. The provinces, and even the inferiour septs into which the island was parcelled, lived in a kind

a kind of federal union with each other ; which the pride, the injustice, the ambition, the avarice, the revenge of different chieftains were ever ready to interrupt. Their histories record the effects of these dangerous passions : the virtues of private life are not generally the subject of history. An impartial and unprejudiced enquirer may still discover many traces of the equity, the rectitude, the benevolence, and generosity of the ancient Irish in their different septs. But men of other countries sometimes judge of them precipitately, from a slight inspection of their futile historians, or from careless or malicious misrepresentation. Thus we are told, that “ the Irish from the “ beginning of time had been buried in the most “ profound barbarism and ignorance ;” that “ they “ were distinguished only by those vices, to which “ human nature, not tamed by education, nor “ restrained by laws, is for ever subject ;” that “ the most simple arts of life, even tillage and “ agriculture, were almost wholly unknown among “ them.” The people, thus traduced, exclaim with indignation, that no brain-sick monk, in days of darkness and superstition, ever betrayed such credulity as appears in these assertions. They are indeed well disposed to retort this severity ; but the Irish have no philosophical historian,

OF THE

INVASIONS of IRELAND,

Previous to the Reign of HENRY the SECOND,

IT hath been already observed, that the temporary armies of the Irish were not calculated for repelling a foreign invasion. And from the moment that

that they came to contend with any other enemies but those of their own island, they experienced the effects of their internal weakness and disunion, as well as their inferiority in the art of war. Bede informs us, that in the year six hundred and eighty-four, the general of Egfrid, king of Northumberland, made a descent on Ireland. But, instead of mentioning any gallant resistance made by the natives, he insinuates, that they trusted more to prayer than arms: and in the plaintive style of compassion laments the miserable havoc of a people, inoffensive, and ever most friendly to the English.

BUT Ireland experienced a still more formidable invasion, when the Danes, Norwegians, and other Scandinavian adventurers began to rove in search of new settlements. The Irish called them by the general names of Normans, and Galls or foreigners. They distinguished their particular tribes by those of Duff-galls, Fin-galls, (black and white foreigners) and Danfhir or Danes. The English called them collectively Ostmen or Eastmen. Their piratical expeditions were commenced about the end of the eighth century. Their associations were gradually enlarged; and their excursions became more and more alarming. They infested England; they threatened France, and Charles the Great found it necessary to fit out a great navy for the security of his coasts. Ireland was weak and improvident; and the country inviting to these foreigners^A. At this time, we are told, that the monarchical power in Ireland was enjoyed in alternate succession, by two branches of what was called the Hy-Nial race, the northern house of Tirone, and the southern or Clan-Colman, seated

^A O'Connor's Dissert.

seated in Meath ; that the power of the monarch was remarkably weakened, the inferior dynasties factious and assuming ; but that the evils of the political constitution were corrected by the reverence paid to religion and learning ; that the people were happy, and the country respected. A new scene of affairs was soon to be disclosed.

THE first invasions of the Danes were made in small parties, for the sake of plunder*. They were attacked and repelled, by the provincial chieftain whose dominions were infested. Other parties appeared in different quarters of the island, terrified the inhabitants by the havoc which they committed ; were again opposed, again put to flight, and again repeated their barbarous incursions. The Irish thus harrassed for twenty years, continued their local contests, without forming any scheme of national union against the common enemy. The northern pirates, either by force or treaty, gradually obtained some small settlements in Ireland ; and at length TURGES, or Turgesius, a warlike Norwegian, landed with a powerful armament in the year 815. He divided his fleet and army, in order to strike terror in different quarters. His followers were indulged in every species of outrage that might drive the inhabitants to despair : they pillaged, they burned, they massacred, without regard to sex, age, or character ; and, of all others, the clergy were persecuted by these pagans with especial fury. The Danes of Ireland flocked to the standard of Turges ; and while the Irish were still infatuated by their private competitions, the invader seated himself at Armagh, from which he expelled the clergy, and lived on their lands in all the state of sovereignty. Other foreigners,

foreigners, encouraged by his success, attempted to share his advantages: but Turges was now so powerful as to repel them. The Irish, after some ill-concerted and unsuccessful efforts, sunk gradually into a state of abject submission; and the northern leader, after a residence of thirty years in Ireland, was at length proclaimed monarch of the kingdom.

THE Irish however still retained so much pride as to be incensed at this violence to the rights of their ancient princes; and the government of the usurper was to the last degree odious and severe. The annalists describe the oppressions, the extortions, the insolence of the Northerners, in the most affecting colours, but particularly their rage against learning and religion, the destruction of all seminaries and religious houses, with their books, utensils and furniture, and the expulsion of their clergy to foreign countries, or to some miserable retreats in Ireland. Their descriptions may possibly be exaggerated, in order to justify the catastrophe of Turges and his Northerners. The old Irish spirit at length revived. Melachlin, prince of Meath, in a time of apparent peace, contrived to seize the usurper. Thus the old annalists record the event, without the poetical embellishments of later times. The joyful intelligence was in an instant spread through Ireland. The Danes were every where surprised by a sudden insurrection, massacred, or dispersed; their leader condemned to death for his cruelties, and the sentence executed, by plunging him into a lake.

THE foreigners were thus reduced to a state of subjection, but not exterminated. When the first rage of indignation and resentment had subsided,

the Irish suffered their remains to continue in the island as subjects and tributaries to particular chieftains. A new colony arrived under the conduct of Amlave Sitrick and Ivar. They professed the most peaceable intentions, and promised to enrich the country by their commerce. They were received; and the Irish, with an infatuated policy, suffered them to become absolute masters of Dublin, Limerick, Waterford, and other maritime places, which they gradually enlarged and fortified with such works as were unknown to the Irish; and in which they lay securely, ready to receive reinforcements from their original country. Their power increased imperceptibly, for they were a warlike and commercial people. And the Irish, in their pride and supineness, their feuds and distractions, suffered them to extend their territories, until they again threatened to dispute the sovereignty of the whole island. They were attacked, defeated, yet still subsisted, carried on their commerce, and, like other particular sects, sometimes acknowledged the superiority of their neighbours, sometimes maintained their independence; were not subdued by tumultuous incursions, nor considerably reduced by casual misfortunes in the field. We are told indeed, that about the year 863, the Danes were totally defeated and driven from Ireland. Yet scarcely have the Irish annalists found leisure to detail the actions of Cormac, the reverend and learned prelate who filled the throne of Munster, when they again return to the contests of Ceallachan with the Danes; and the romantic adventures of this Irish prince.

BUT the history of these northern foreigners seems to have been related imperfectly by the Irish, and

and with a studied obscurity. The victories of their countrymen, and the misfortunes, as well as the ferocity of these their rivals, they were naturally tempted to exaggerate. It is evident, that through the various revolutions of some centuries they continued a very powerful, and were sometimes, the most distinguished sept of Ireland. They embraced Christianity about the year 948. And their settlement was so well established, and their consequence so considerable, that they engaged the attention of the neighbouring countries. A charter of king Edgar, dated at Gloucester, in the year 964, purports, that this prince had "conquered the greatest part of Ireland, together "with its most noble city of Dublin." The Asiatic style of this charter, and the silence of English, as well as of Irish annals, renders its authenticity justly suspected; and from the distinction with which the city of Dublin is mentioned in this record, it is evident, that the framer of it formed his ideas of Ireland from the Danish or Orkney-settlements. Dublin had never been a place of note, or regarded even as the capital of Leinster in former times. But however the authority of this charter may be rejected, it was the policy of Edgar to keep the foreign Danes in awe; and his fleets might have visited their maritime cities in Ireland; if not to conquer, at least to intimidate them, and to exact some token of their submission. The conjecture seems to receive some countenance from a coin of Ethelred the Second, in the collection of Trinity College Dublin, evidently struck in this city, and possibly intended as tribute-money: not to mention another coin of Edgar found in Dublin, with the name of a minter on the reverse, evidently Irish. . . . THE

THE most vigorous and dangerous enemy, whom the northern foreigners experienced in Ireland, was the hero so celebrated in the annals of this country by the name of BRIAN BOROMY. While yet general to his brother the king of Munster, he gave them repeated overthrows. A long life spent with honour in the field endeared him to his countrymen, who on the death of his brother called him, in an advanced age to the throne of Munster. His first care was to avenge the death of his predecessor, who had been killed by a chieftain of some note. He defeated this chieftain in a battle, and made a terrible execution of fifteen hundred Danes who marched to his assistance. Another chieftain opposed him with another reinforcement of Danes, but with the same success. The tranquillity of his province was thus established; the southern moiety of the island acknowledged his sovereignty; and when the Irish and Danes of Leinster refused to pay him tribute, he marched against them at the head of his renowned militia formed in South Munster, and known by the title of the invincible tribe of DALCAIS. He besieged and stormed the city of Dublin, and reduced the inhabitants to a state of due subordination. The fame of Brian proved an incentive to other princes: they rose against the Norman power in other quarters of the island: and, dissatisfied at the inactivity of Malachy their monarch, they deposed him, and raised the illustrious king of Munster to this station.

BRIAN laboured to support his new dignity, with the spirit of a veteran, and the prudence and moderation of a man advanced beyond the age of seventy. All malecontents were subdued and terrified.

terrified. The factious were conciliated by the equity and benignity of the new monarch. They who had suffered in times of commotion were redressed, they who had been ejected from their possessions by the foreigners were restored; they who had been reduced to a state of bondage were set at liberty. The havoc made by invaders was repaired; the clergy restored to their endowments; churches and religious houses rose suddenly from their ruins; learned seminaries were re-established and enlarged; laws were reviewed, corrected, and strictly enforced. Brian was now preparing to crown all the glorious actions of his reign, by building and fitting out a formidable navy, to strike terror into all future invaders of the island, when the Danes, still left in free possession of the maritime cities, invited their countrymen to their assistance. The neighbouring Irish, impatient of the ancient tribute still exacted by the monarch, readily concurred with them; and even encouraged the foreigners to assist in their insurrection. The whole province of Leinster suddenly caught the flame of war, and called Brian to the field at the age of eighty-eight. He lived to be a witness of the valour of his son Mortagh in the desperate engagement of Clontarffe, and the victory of his troops. The son fell in the field; the venerable monarch, we are told, was slain by some fugitives, as he lay unguarded in his pavilion.

By the death of Brian Boromy, the title of monarch reverted to Malachy, or Melachlin, who had been deposed, and who, with a singular moderation, lived contented with his own province Meath, acquiescing in the unanimous voice of the nation, and even serving in the army of his rival.

His

His misfortunes taught him the necessity of a vigorous administration. He intimidated and restrained the factious chieftains; he pursued the Danes with severity; and the Irish historians in the bold style of hyperbole assure us, that he totally extinguished their power. Yet nothing is more certain than that they still maintained their settlements in Ireland, and continued a distinct and powerful sept. Their maritime cities were governed by chieftains whom they called kings; their church was modelled without the assistance of their neighbours, and their bishops remitted for consecration to the primate of Canterbury.

THEY had the more leisure to strengthen and enlarge their settlements, as the death of Malachy involved the Irish in an extraordinary degree of confusion. The alternate succession of the two royal houses had been interrupted by the election of Brian to the sovereignty. Animated by his example, every provincial king aspired to the same honour: but, among the several competitors, Donchad, son of Brian, at first proved the most powerful. He established his authority in the south, and proceeded to enforce it in the northern moiety of Ireland, when Turlogh, his nephew suddenly started up, by encouragement of a king of Leinster, and was proclaimed monarch by his faction. The country was harrassed by their competitions; laws and religion lost their influence; licentiousness and immorality were the natural attendants of local feuds and hostilities^d. These were the times, say the Irish writers, in which Bernard the Monk gives such an horrid picture of Ireland.

DONCHAD at length yielded to the superiour power of his rival. In the anguish of disappointed ambition

ambition, he fled to Rome, and laid his crown at the feet of the holy pontiff, promising to invest him with the sovereignty of Ireland. Still he could obtain no assistance. In despair he assumed the habit of a religious, and concealed himself in Saint Stephen's Abbey at Rome.

TURLOGH, thus left without any considerable competitor, exercised the monarchical power, though not formally elected or recognized by the states. The defects of his title he endeavoured to supply by the merit of his administration, in restraining and reforming abuses, in his equity and justice. Such at least is the testimony of archbishop Lanfranc to the conduct of this Irish king^c: whose elevation he attributes to the interposition of Providence in favour of the people of Ireland, But if his reign gave some check to faction and licentiousness, these broke forth with double violence on his death. Morrough O'Brian in the South, and Donald O'Lochlan in the North, contended for the monarchy: each was recognized by his party, and each received the submissions of those chieftains and septs who were most exposed to his power.

IN the midst of intestine contests and commotions, Ireland seemed ready to be subdued by the first foreign invader who should attempt the conquest of an inviting country. We are told in the Chronicle of Man, that Magnus, king of Norway, in the course of his adventures, and acquisitions, resolved to complete them by the reduction of Ireland, and with a small fleet made a descent on Ulster, in order to view the coasts. As he landed without opposition, he ventured to pierce into the country

country without caution or apprehension. He was suddenly surrounded ; for it was the custom of the Irish instead of meeting their enemy, with all the parade of war, to watch their advantage, and dart unexpectedly upon them from their retreats. Magnus and his party were cut to pieces. Thus the contempt he entertained of the Irish happily proved his ruin. I say happily ; for, (as the noble author of the Life of Henry the Second judiciously observes) “ if this enterprize had been more wisely conducted, and the success had been answerable to what the divisions among the Irish princes, and the inclination of the Ostmen in favour of a monarch from whose country most of them originally came, seemed reasonably to promise, it would have erected in Ireland a Norwegian kingdom, which together with Man, and the other dominions of Magnus, full of shipping and good seamen, might, in process of time, have composed a maritime power capable of maintaining itself, perhaps forever, against that of the English, and disputing with them the sovereignty of the sea. It may indeed be esteemed most happy for this nation, that no king of Denmark, or of Norway, or of Sweden, nor any prince of the Ostmen settled in Ireland, ever gained an entire dominion of that isle ; for, had it remained under the orderly government of any of these, its neighbourhood would have been, in many respects, prejudicial to England.” — Another power, and other settlers were soon to be established in Ireland, and the disorders of this isle operated gradually, yet effectually, to render their establishment easy and successful.

THE



T H E
H I S T O R Y
O F
I R E L A N D
FROM THE
INVASION OF HENRY II.
B O O K I.

C H A P. I.

State of Ireland favourable to an invasion in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.—State of the neighbouring kingdoms.—Scheme of invading Ireland formed by Henry the Second.—Pretences for this invasion.—Application to pope Adrian.—His motives for complying with the request of Henry.—His Bull.—The Irish clergy earnest to regulate their church.—Henry's design necessarily suspended.—Review of the state of Ireland at this period.—Factions and quarrels of its chieftains.—Dermot king of Leinster driven from this province.—Flies to England.—Solicits aid from Henry;—who licences his subjects to assist him.—Dermot hopeless.—Applies to the earl of Chepflow.—Fitz-Stephen and Fitz-Gerald engage in his service.—Dermot returns to Ireland.—His

VOL. I. B return

return discovered to Roderic O'Connor.—His submissions and treaty.—Arrival of Fitz-Stephen.—March to Wexford.—The Britons repulsed.—Return to the assault.—The town surrendered.—First British colony in Ireland.—Expedition to Ossory.—Ossorians defeated.—Horrid instance of revenge.—Second invasion of Ossory. Prendergast revolts to the Ossorians.—Dermod invaded.—Arrival of Fitz-Gerald.—Danger and escape of Prendergast.—Conduct of Roderic.—He collects his forces.—Is suspicious of his vassals.—Dismisses the northerns.—Dermod and the Britons retire.—Roderic treats with Fitz-Stephen and with Dermod, but without effect.—Preparations for a battle.—Timid policy of Roderic.—Treaty with Dermod renewed and concluded.—Fitz-Stephen intent to secure Wexford.—Roderic defeated in his attempt against the prince of Thomond.—Success of the first British adventurers nothing wonderful or extraordinary.

SUCH were the state and circumstances of Ireland, for a considerable time before the English invasion, that any neighbouring potentate, whose dominions were so composed, and his resources so opulent as to enable him to engage in foreign conquests, might have naturally made it the object of his ambition. But in the eleventh, and the beginning of the twelfth century, the circumstances of the neighbouring kingdoms were by no means favourable to such attempts. France was dismembered by the Norman acquisitions, weakened by the independent and tumultuous spirit of its barons, and intimidated by vassal princes raised even to a degree of formidable rivalry. England, by its situation,

was

was naturally more attentive to this western island ; but in England, at this period, we find a people dispirited by the Danish yoke ; the bold usurpation of Harold instantly opposed by the Norman ; a successful invasion followed by a reign of disorder, severity, and rigorous measures for the establishment of the conquerors ; a prince solely intent to secure and perpetuate his new dominion, as well as to preserve his original and favourite territory ; his immediate succours irregularly appointed, or rather violent usurpers of the throne, exposed to faction and insurrection, called out to the defence of their own titles and territories, and sometimes engaged in bloody civil wars, with various changes of fortune ; while the lords and princes of inferiour territories in different parts of Europe, oftentimes possessed of considerable power, and attended by warlike and adventurous followers, found a new and transporting object for their ambition, and in all the phrenzy of fanaticism and romantic valour poured into the East for the recovery of the Holy-Land.

IRELAND, during this period^a, though like other more renowned countries, principally confined to her own internal affairs, uninfluenced by the fortunes of other states, and unaffected by their revolutions, yet was not entirely unknown to the adjacent kingdoms. The Irish chieftains, by frequently engaging in the contests of Wales, had extended the fame of their valour : it was echoed by those whom commerce or devotion had brought from Ireland, who amused the ignorant, and indulged their own national vanity by splendid accounts of their native residence and the prowess of their countrymen. Distressed lords and factious

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leaders

leaders were induced to seek relief and assistance in their island. On the disgrace of earl Godwin^a, in the reign of Edward the Confessor, Harold, the bravest of his sons, chose his retreat in Ireland, and there formed such connexions as proved the resource of his family when his Norman rival was in the height of glory and success. His three sons fled thither immediately after the defeat at Hastings, and, in the reign of William the Conqueror, led an Irish army into England, to assert the liberty of their country and the pretensions of their family; nor were their auxiliaries repelled but by the obstinate and repeated efforts of the count of Brittany. ^bThe Welsh annalists inform us, that when Arnulph earl of Pembroke rebelled against Henry the first, he solicited the assistance of Mortough the Irish monarch; by his emissary Gerald he sought the daughter of this prince in marriage, was encouraged to make a voyage into Ireland, but returned without accomplishing his wishes, or obtaining any succours. And this might possibly have laid the foundation of that friendly intercourse, which William of Malmesbury assures us was invariably preserved between Henry and this Irish king. France is also said to have drawn considerable succours from this country in several of her wars; and if we may believe the Irish annalists^c, the assistance granted by some Irish princes to his rival first provoked Henry the Second to the design of annexing Ireland to his dominions.

HOWEVER this may be, the design was conceived soon after he had ascended the throne of England without dispute or competition, without
jealousies

^a Hoveden.^b Caradoc.^c Ann. MS. Trin Col. Dub.

jealousies or discontent, with all that brilliancy of character naturally arising from his distinguished abilities, and with an extent of territory unknown to his predecessors. We generally do such honour to the policy and circumspection of great princes, as to suppose that such designs are formed on mature deliberation, on an accurate enquiry into the condition and circumstances of the country they are to invade, and a thorough knowledge of those defects in polity and manners, that internal weakness and disorder, which prepare the way for a foreign invader, and promise an easy and effectual conquest. But a very general and superficial knowledge of this island was sufficient to fire the ambition of a powerful and popular sovereign, at a time when the difficulties of his reign were yet unexperienced, and when it was reproachful to any distinguished character not to be possessed with some scheme of gallant enterprize.

A PRETENCE alone was wanting to give some colour of justice to the design : and here his flatterers seem to have exerted all their ingenuity and address. ^pIt was affirmed by those who ventured to dictate to an ignorant people, that the Irish had originally possessed themselves of their country by permission of Gurguntius, a British king^a, and that, as descendants of the Britons, they were the natural and rightful subjects of the English monarch. It was urged that the renowned Arthur, Egfrid the Northumbrian, Edgar the illustrious Saxon prince, had all led their armies into Ireland, and there made valuable acquisitions, which their successor was in honour bound to recover and maintain. It was suggested that Englishmen had frequently

frequently been sold as slaves in this island; an instance of cruelty and barbarism, which gave him full right to invade and subdue it. But the forged or suspicious histories of ancient times, the obsolete claims of Saxon or British princes, however they might influence the vulgar, yet were not deemed sufficient for that fair and plausible colouring which might conceal the iniquity of an attempt against an unoffending people. And as to the crime of trafficking in slaves, both nations, it was well known, had been equally involved in it. If the Irish had purchased, the Saxons had freely offered themselves and their children to slavery for an insignificant price; if the Irish were less sordid and unnatural, yet the prisoners taken on their unsuccessful inroads in the reign of William the Conqueror, had been sold in great numbers; so that the English clergy were obliged to remonstrate against this practice, which they pronounced utterly unchristian, and with difficulty prevailed on the king to relinquish his ungodly gain.

BUT the sagacity of Henry, or the suggestions of an interested and subtle ecclesiastic, soon supplied the necessary pretence for a free indulgence of his ambition. The papal power was gradually advancing to a formidable height, and extending its influence even to the extremity of the British islands. Not contented with assuming a dominion in the ecclesiastical system, it had already dictated to kings and nations in their secular concerns. It had espoused the cause of William the Norman, made a solemn decision in favour of his claims, and denounced its spiritual vengeance against all those who should presume to resist a prince, whom

the sovereign pontiff declared rightful and lawful inheritour of the crown of England. The usurper Stephen had obtained a ratification of his title from the same authority. To this power Henry now determined to resort, and by the solemnity of a papal decree to sanctify his intended enterprize against Ireland. "John Salisbury, his chaplain, was made the agent in this important negociation, and acted with the zeal and diligence of a man conscious that his success would recommend him equally to his royal master and his spiritual sovereign. He represented to Adrian, the reigning pope, that the inhabitants of Ireland were sunk into the most wretched state of corruption, with respect to both morals and religion; that Henry, zealous for the honour and enlargement of God's kingdom, had conceived the pious design of erecting it in this unhappy country; was ready to devote himself and all his powers to this meritorious service, imploring the benediction of the pontiff, and requesting his permission and authority to enter Ireland, to reduce the disobedient and corrupt, to eradicate all sin and wickedness, to instruct the ignorant, and spread the blessed Influence of the gospel in its purity and perfection; promising at the same time to pay a yearly tribute to St. Peter from the land thus to be reduced to his obedience and that of the holy see. Habituated as we may be to the depravity of mankind, one cannot seriously reflect upon the profane hypocrisy of this transaction without the utmost horror. Little did Henry foresee, in the blindness of his ambition, the perplexities he was to experience from that power he now contributed to aggrandize, or the heavy weight of oppression with which it was to fall upon his own head.

ADRIAN

H Hagulfstad.

ADRIAN secretly exulted in an application which favoured his enormous claims, and recognized his authority; nor was he displeased to gratify his countryman, a prince of exalted character, lately raised to the throne, and who had not yet discovered his dispositions to the hierarchy. Rome had long contended for extensive powers in England; Ireland had but lately been disposed to acknowledge its supremacy. *All ecclesiastical authority had, till about four years before the accession of Henry the Second, been exercised by her own prelates; nor had the ceremonies and discipline of her church, points of the greatest moment in this age, been conformable to those of Rome. The pontificate, however, by the interested zeal of its numerous and active emissaries, had at length contrived to extend its influence even to this remote island; had alarmed the Irish clergy with fears of the irregularity of their ecclesiastical constitution, and persuaded them to submit to a reform modelled and dictated by Rome. Cardinal Paparon was, in the year eleven hundred and fifty-two, admitted into Ireland with a legantine commission: three thousand ecclesiasticks assembled by his direction in the town of Drogheda: four palls were solemnly received from the pope by the prelates of Armagh, Dublin, Cashel and Tuam: the celebration of Easter was adjusted according to the Romish decisions; and for the further reformation of the church, the celibacy of the clergy was enforced, and their privileges and properties secured by various canons. Thus was the correspondence opened with the church of Ireland, and the pre-eminence of Rome formally acknowledged. It remained therefore for the pope to improve these favourable

favourable beginnings, to embrace the occasion of extending his new dominion in Ireland, as well as to conciliate the friendship of Henry. A bull was framed without delay, fully conformable to the wishes and purposes of the king. It is here inserted at large, and affords a shocking instance of the profligacy and impiety of papal usurpation.

“ **A** DRIAN^x, bishop, servant of the servants
 “ of God, to his dearest son in Christ the
 “ illustrious king of England, greeting, and
 “ apostolic benediction.

“ FULL laudably and profitably hath your
 “ magnificence conceived the design of propagat-
 “ ing your glorious renown on earth, and com-
 “ pleting your reward of eternal happiness in
 “ heaven; while, as a catholic prince, you are
 “ intent on enlarging the borders of the church,
 “ teaching the truth of the Christian faith to the
 “ ignorant and rude, exterminating the roots of
 “ vice from the field of the Lord, and for the
 “ more convenient execution of this purpose,
 “ requiring the counsel and favour of the apostolic
 “ see. In which, the maturer your deliberation,
 “ and the greater the discretion of your procedure,
 “ by so much the happier, we trust, will be your
 “ progress, with the assistance of the Lord; as all
 “ things are used to come to a prosperous end and
 “ issue, which take their beginning from the
 “ ardour of faith and the love of religion.

“ **T**HERE is indeed no doubt but that Ireland,
 “ and all the islands on which Christ the sun of
 “ righteousness hath shone, and which have re-
 “ ceived

“ ceived the doctrines of the Christian faith, do
 “ belong to the jurisdiction of St. Peter and of the
 “ holy Roman church, as your excellency also
 “ doth acknowledge. And therefore we are the
 “ more solicitous to propagate the righteous plan-
 “ tation of faith in this land, and the branch
 “ acceptable to God, as we have the secret con-
 “ viction of conscience that this is more especially
 “ our bounden duty.

“ You then, most dear son in Christ, have
 “ signified to us your desire to enter into the
 “ island of Ireland, in order to reduce the people
 “ to obedience unto laws, and to extirpate the
 “ plants of vice; and that you are willing to pay
 “ from each house a yearly pension of one penny
 “ to St. Peter, and that you will preserve the
 “ rights of the churches of this land whole and
 “ inviolate. We therefore, with that grace and
 “ acceptance suited to your pious and laudable
 “ design, and favourably assenting to your petition,
 “ do hold it good and acceptable, that, for
 “ extending the borders of the church, restraining
 “ the progress of vice, for the correction of
 “ manners, the planting of virtue, and the en-
 “ crease of religion, you enter this island, and
 “ execute therein whatever shall pertain to the
 “ honour of God and welfare of the land; and
 “ that the people of this land receive you honou-
 “ rably, and reverence you as their lord: the
 “ rights of their churches still remaining sacred
 “ and inviolate; and saving to St. Peter the annual
 “ pension of one penny from every house.

“ If then you be resolved to carry the design
 “ you have conceived into effectual execution,

“ study to form this nation to virtuous manners ;
 “ and labour by yourself, and others whom you
 “ shall judge meet for this work, in faith, word,
 “ and life, that the church may be there adorned,
 “ that the religion of the Christian faith may
 “ be planted and grow up, and that all things
 “ pertaining to the honour of God, and the sal-
 “ vation of souls, be so ordered, that you may be
 “ entitled to the fulness of eternal reward from
 “ God, and obtain a glorious renown on earth
 “ throughout all ages.”

THE Bull, thus framed, was presented to king Henry, together with a ring, the token of his investiture, as rightful sovereign of Ireland.

SOME Irish writers^L, scandalized at the gross representations of the corruption and barbarism of their country, seem willing to question the authenticity of this bull : as if the character of a church or nation were infallibly decided by the sentence of a pope^N ; and as if the charge of corruption and barbarism had not been as strongly and offensively urged against the English, when the purposes of the holy see required it. But the reality of this transaction between Adrian and king Henry is so far from being suspicious, that there is some ground to conjecture that the Irish ecclesiastics themselves were immediately informed of it. “From the date of the pope’s bull we find their synods multiplied, and their regulations repeated and enforced, as it were with an affected solicitude to take away the reproach of their church^D. We are told that they made the most salutary ordinances, not only for

^L Grat. Lucius.

^Q Ann. 4 Mag. MSS.

^N Eadmer. p. 91.

^D Colgan Trias Thaum.

for the preservation of clerical discipline, but for the reformation of manners : and, (what bespeaks neither barbarism nor ignorance) they provided for the regular instruction of their clergy. Armagh was then their most reputed seat of learning : and by a solemn ordinance it was provided, that no one should be allowed to profess or teach theology in any of their churches, who had not been educated in this seminary. But whether their zeal and solicitude were merely accidental, or purposedly intended to demonstrate that the reformation of their church did not require the interference of a foreign prince, this conspiracy between the pope and Henry was certainly alarming ; and had concert or policy subsisted in Ireland, should have united its inhabitants, of all orders and conditions, in the most vigorous and effectual measures to guard against invasion. *So possessed was Henry with his design against this country, and so elated by the commission now received from Rome, that the empress his mother is said to have employed the most urgent solicitations to divert him from an enterprize which might endanger his immediate interests, as well in France as England.

AND certain it is, that however invested with the plenitude of papal authority, and however flattered with the ideas of conquest and dominion, Henry was, as yet, by no means prepared for such an enterprize. "In the year in which the bull of Adrian is dated, we find him engaged in repressing the insurrection of his brother Geoffry, and supporting his own claim to Anjou. "The affairs of England were not yet completely settled ; and the regulation of this country gave full employment to

to the vigour and abilities of its monarch. The inquietude of Wales obliged him to lead a formidable army into this principality ; and scarcely had he reduced it to his obedience, when he was again called to the continent by the death of Geoffry, where he engaged in wars and treaties for securing and extending his dominions. These were succeeded by the long and painful contest which he maintained against the church, in which the inflexible and intrepid spirit of Becket, kept him in a continual state of agitation. The design against Ireland was therefore necessarily suspended, and seemed to have been forgotten, till accident revived it, or the factions rather, and competitions of a corrupted and disordered people, opened a way for the English arms to penetrate into their unhappy country.

If we review the state of Ireland at this period, we there find a monarch little more than titular, depending for his power and influence on his own abilities and vigour, harrassed by faction, and opposed by powerful rivals^w ; a number of provincial chieftains, who assumed the title and the rights of royalty, paid a precarious tribute to their superior, and united, if they were disposed to unite with him, as allies rather than subjects. In Ulster, the family of the northern Hi-Nial, as it was called, exercised an hereditary jurisdiction in the modern counties of Tirone, Derry, and Donnegal ; claimed a right of supremacy over the lords of Fermanagh, Antrim, and Argial, which included the counties of Armagh, Monaghan, Lowth, and some adjacent districts : while Dunleve, prince of Uladh (so the county of Down was named) disputed the superiority of this family,

family, and affected an independent state. In Munster, the descendants of the illustrious Brien ruled in all the pride of ancestry, impatient to recover the honours of their family, till, confined by more powerful rivals to the territory of North-Munster, or Thomond, they left the warlike sept of Mac-Arthy independent sovereigns of Desmond, the southern division. In Connaught, the princes, known by the name of O'Connor, were acknowledged sovereigns of the Eastern territory. Tiernan O'Ruarc, an active, restless, military chief, governed in Breffney, containing the modern county of Leitrim, and some adjacent districts. Meath, or the southern Hi-Nial, was subject to the princes of the great Irish family of Clan-Colman, Murchard O'Malachlyn, and his successors. Leinster, divided into several inferior principalities, as that of Ossory, Decies, and the septs of Ostmen formed of the remains of the Danes, and other foreigners, seated principally in Dublin and Waterford, and governed generally by their own chieftains, gave the title of royalty to Dermot, surnamed Mac-Murchad, a prince represented by his countrymen in the most odious colours: and although his vices have been evidently exaggerated, yet, even in an age and country of rudeness, he appears to have been distinguished by a rude, fierce, turbulent, and oppressive spirit. 'His father had governed Leinster with a tyrannical severity. Seventeen of his dependent lords, we are assured, were either capitally executed, or lost their eyes by his cruelty, within one year: and Dermot, with his principality, inherited too great a portion of the same temper'. His stature, and bodily strength, together with a boisterous

• Ibid. Ann. Anon. MSS. † Girald. Hib. exp. Ann. MSS. ut sup.

boisterous valour, had rendered him the admiration of all the inferiour orders of his subjects; and these, as the proper instruments of his ambition, he was careful to protect and favour. His donations and endowments of religious houses recommended him to the clergy; but his tributary chieftains felt the full weight of his pride and tyranny. To them his government was odious; so that in his attachments to the reigning factions of the island, he was, without principle or steadiness, determined to that side which, for the present time, seemed most likely to support him.

THE chief competitors for the rank of monarch of Ireland, were the heirs of the two houses, of O'Connor, and the northern Hi-Nial. Of these, Torlogh O'Connor was in possession*, and though not generally recognized, and opposed, especially by his northern rival O'Lochlan, he yet maintained his state with magnificence, and supported his title with sufficient vigour. A decisive victory gained over the forces of O'Brien increased his renown, but served at the same time to awaken the jealousy of his rival; who, in a general convention of the states obliged him to consent to a tacit partition of authority, by which O'Lochlan was left sovereign of the northern province; and such dispositions were to be made in other districts as their joint interests might require. Such treaties between two superiours generally ended in a design dictated by some irregular passion, and executed against the peace and welfare of their neighbours. It was soon resolved

v Ann. MSS. ut sup.

* The Irish annalists have a particular name for a monarch thus circumstanced; and which they apply to Torlogh. They call him *Ríob go Frefaura, King with Reluctance*. i. e. a monarch who had not his authority recognized in all the provinces.

resolved to transfer the territory of O'Ruarc to a more favourite partizan; and the expedition was undertaken by the Connaught and the Leinster princes. O'Ruarc was surprized, defeated, and driven from his dominions. He had married the daughter of the prince of Meath, a lady distinguished by her beauty, but of a gay and amorous disposition. She had inspired the king of Leinster with an unlawful passion, and enflamed it by the freedom of her deportment; and if the present expedition had not been secretly contrived or fomented for the purposes of his adulterous love, Dermot at least resolved to take advantage of the distresses of her husband, and to possess himself of Dervorghal, (so the lady was called.) By the assistance of a base brother she was conveyed to his armsⁿ, and with an affected reluctance carried off in triumph into his own province *. AN

N A. D. 1153.

* Giraldus assigns this incident as the immediate cause of the expulsion of Dermot, and the first English invasion; and all the English historians have implicitly followed his authority. But the monk was neither a cautious examiner of the reports he heard in Ireland, nor an accurate enquirer into the true causes which opened the way to the successful progress of his countrymen. He came into Ireland with an apparent contempt of the country and its inhabitants; and that contracted mind which produced this contempt, made him satisfied with the reports of those who were of the same rank of understanding with himself. He asked the cause of that resentment which drove Dermot from his province. He was answered, that it arose from the seizure of O'Ruarc's wife: and he mistook the first rise of personal animosity between two chiefs, for the immediate occasion of the revenge executed against Dermot. But the Irish annalists are of authority in this case, if in any: and they uniformly agree that this outrage was committed full sixteen years before Fitz-Stephen was invited into Ireland. Dermot and O'Ruarc, during this period, had frequently contended with various success; and private injuries were apparently forgotten in the tumult of faction and public contention; till the death of his protector O'Lochlan left Dermot exposed to all the rage of his political as well as his personal enemies. The resentments of O'Ruarc might have revived upon a fair occasion; but their operation could not have been considerable, if the political attachments of Dermot had not been particularly offensive. It was the partizan of O'Lochlan who was pronounced unworthy to fill the throne of Leinster; not the ravisher of Dervorghal.

AN outrage of this kind was not always regarded by the Irish with abhorrence^d : they considered it rather as an act of pardonable gallantry, or such an offence at most as a reasonable pecuniary compensation might atone for. But the fullen and haughty Breffnian, provoked more by the insolence and treachery of the ravisher, than the infidelity of his wife, conceived the most determined animosity against Dermod. He practised secretly with Torlogh, promised the most inviolable attachment to his interest, and prevailed on him, not only to reinstate him in his possessions, but to revenge the insult of Mac-Murchad, whom he represented (and justly) as a faithless vassal, really devoted to the service of his rival. ^The King of Connaught led his Forces into Leinster, rescued Dervorghal, from her paramour, and restored her to her friends^e ; with whom she lived, if not in a state of reconciliation with her husband, at least in that opulence and splendor, which enabled her to atone for the crime of infidelity by the usual method of magnificent donations to the church.

THIS service naturally formed a close connection between O'Ruarc and the Connaught prince^f, with whom he remained in firm union, and by whose assistance he was enabled to revenge his wrongs, by frequently joining with the discontented chieftains of Leinster, and harrassing his enemy king Dermod; till the Death of Torlogh, in the year one thousand one hundred and fifty-six, rewarded the vigorous efforts of O'Lochlan with the dignity of monarch. Dermod was the first to acknowledge this new sovereign, and by the merit both of his former attachment, and his new submission, found

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support

^d Spencer.^A Ann. MSS. var.^G A. D. 1154.^B Ibid.

support in his private quarrels, and in his turn was enabled to wreak his animosity on the prince of Breffney. But he had taken his party with too great precipitation. His patron, with the most outrageous defiance of all the precepts of humanity and good faith, seized on Dunleve, the prince of Uladh, with whom he had but now concluded a solemn treaty, and put out his eyes: which so provoked the neighbouring chieftains, that they instantly took arms to avenge their associate, and defend themselves from the like barbarity. O'Lochlan was defeated, and by falling in the battle of Litterluin^c, as it was called, extinguished the hopes and pretensions of his family, and left the long-contested title of monarch to Roderic, son and successor of the late king of Connaught.

RODERIC, during the reign of his father and his own government of Connaught, had been for the most part engaged in the field, and though not always victorious, had acquired the reputation of valour which was now confirmed in his present exaltation, to which the prevailing power of his faction had raised him. Determined^d to strike his enemies with terror, and to approve himself worthy of pre-eminence, he led a numerous army to Dublin, immediately after the death of O'Lochlan; was there solemnly inaugurated; engaged the Ostmén-inhabitants in his pay; and, thus reinforced, marched towards the north, and was received by the chieftains with every mark of submission. Dermot, justly dreading the vigour of this new monarch, and expecting all the fury of a triumphant resentment against the partizan of his fallen rival, was seized with the utmost consternation,

sternation, and in the phrenzy of vexation and despair, set fire to his own town of Ferns, lest his enemies should have the satisfaction of spoiling it. Nor was he mistaken in his apprehensions. Roderic soon returned, attended by O'Ruarc, still the inveterate enemy of the Leinster prince. They overran the whole province with an irresistible force. All the inferior lords were at once driven to make their peace and acknowledge the supremacy of Roderic; Dermot was deposed, as a man utterly unworthy of his station; to which another of his family was nominated, and gave sureties for his submission and fidelity to the monarch; who in the full career of glory pierced into Munster, regulated this province at his pleasure, and returning to Meath, held a numerous and magnificent convention of the states, in which his grandeur and authority were so strikingly displayed, that the ancient honours of his country seemed to revive, at the very moment when all such expectations were on the point of being utterly extinguished; and the insolence of triumphant faction was ready to produce a revolution more important than Ireland had yet experienced.

On the very first appearance of an invasion Dermot felt the effects of his tyrannical government. His tributaries had at once deserted him; and some of the most considerable among them as the Danish lord of Dublin, and the chieftain of Ossory, united with his enemies. His abject flattery and submission could not efface the memory of his former severities. The chief of the O'Birnes, a powerful sept in that part of Leinster now called Wicklow, was with difficulty persuaded by the clergy to admit him to his presence, disa-

vowed all attachment to him, and with the haughtiness of a superior commanded him to depart, as he regarded his personal safety. And now, defeated, and degraded, in the bitterness of insulted pride, and the rage of malignant resentment, he formed the desperate purpose of abandoning his kingdom, and seeking in foreign countries the means of regaining his state, and gratifying his revenge. The situation of his territory naturally pointed out England as his place of immediate refuge; he embarked with sixty followers, and arrived at the port of Bristol.

IN England the odious part of his character was unknown. He was considered as an injured prince, deserted by rebellious vassals, and forced from his dominions by an iniquitous confederacy; and he was received with a suitable degree of pity and respect, especially by the clergy, who entertained the friend and benefactor of their order in the monastery of Augustines with the utmost hospitality. Here he learned that Henry the king of England, whom he now professed to consider as his sole resource, was engaged in Aquitaine, and thither he immediately proceeded. He appeared before the king in all the marks of distress and sorrow, and falling at his feet, made a passionate and affecting narrative of his misfortunes, enlarged on the malice of his countrymen, the treachery of his pretended friends, and the rebellion of his subjects, imploring the protection and assistance of Henry, the fame of whose magnanimity and generosity had prompted him to this address; adding, that if he should be so happy as to obtain his powerful interposition, he would acknowledge him

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as his liege lord, and hold his dominions, which he was thus confident of regaining, in vassalage to Henry and his heirs.

NOTHING could have been more acceptable to the king than this petition, which revived the flattering ideas he had formerly conceived, and afforded a new pretence for leading an army into Ireland. But his affairs were still perplexed. His contest with the clergy subsisted; and he had but now received new proof of the obstinacy and violence of Becket; while the insurrections of his subjects in the provinces of France, fomented secretly by Louis, engaged him busily both in war and negotiation. Yet still determined to improve the present incident as far as his situation might permit, he received the Irish prince with the utmost kindness, affected to commiserate his wrongs, made him munificent presents, accepted his tender of allegiance^c, and dismissed him with a letter of credence addressed to all his subjects, notifying his grace and protection granted to the King of Leinster, and declaring that whosoever within his dominions should be disposed to aid him in the recovery of his territory, might be assured of his free licence and royal favour. Dermot returned to England highly elevated by his favourable reception, and still more by the hopes of deriving important advantages from this letter. He repaired once more to Bristol, the usual resort of Irish vessels, and where of consequence he expected intelligence from his own country. Here he made publication of Henry's letter, repeated his piteous tale, and lavished his promises on all those who should assist the friend and vassal of their sovereign;

sovereign ; but without effect. Whether his character and conduct had by this time been represented in an unfavourable light, or whether a disadvantageous opinion had been formed of his country, no one could be found, even in those days of adventure, to listen to his flattering promises, and take arms in his cause.

A MONTHⁿ thus elapsed without any prospect of succours, and Dermot began to abandon all hopes of a restoration, when, as his last desperate effort, he was persuaded to address himself to Richard earl of Chepstow or Strigul, as it was antiently named, son of Gilbert, a nobleman of the illustrious house of Clare, known by the titles both of Chepstow and Pembroke, and of considerable note and consequence in Wales. His son was distinguished as well by his military genius, as by his station and alliances ; attended by a powerful train^o of followers, whose affections he had gained by his courtesy and generosity ; but, estranged from the royal favour, retired and disengaged, his fortune dissipated, his distresses urgent, and his prospects gloomy, he was thought likely to comply with the overtures of Dermot, who pressed him with the most urgent solicitations. These however were received with a coldness and reserve little suited to his present views. The earl, better fitted for the execution,^o than the conduct of a bold design, was scrupulous and embarrassed : and, where he was to take a leading part, considered every difficulty minutely, and stated every objection in its full force. He could not consider the general licence of Henry as a sufficient warrant for a measure of such consequence as that of leading his

his vassals into a foreign country. Dermot renewed his instances, and redoubled his promises. He engaged even to give him his Daughter Eva in marriage, and to make him heir to his kingdom ; though sensible that he had no power to nominate his heir, by the antient usage and institutions of his country : such tempting offers at length prevailed over the scruples of earl Richard. He covenanted to assist him with a considerable force, which he appointed to transport into Ireland in the ensuing spring, provided he could obtain the king's particular licence and approbation.

ELEVATED by the success of this negotiation^A, Dermot conceived that he had most effectually provided for his re-establishment ; and now advanced as far as to St. David's in South Wales^B, in order to return privately into Ireland, to collect the remains of his adherents, and to prepare for the reception of his expected ally. He was received by the bishop of this see with particular kindness, who affected the utmost indignation at his wrongs, and pity of his sufferings, and was particularly studious to gain friends to a prince whose munificence to his clergy had every where made him a favourite of the order, in despite of tyranny and adultery. Rice Fitz-Griffith, who commanded in this country, had for some time meditated a revolt from the king of England. Robert Fitz-Stephen, an active, brave, and skilful soldier, had been entrusted by the Welchman with the government of Cardigan ; but as he proved not well disposed to favour his rebellious designs, he was seized by his order, and confined three years in prison. Such was the opinion formed of his abilities in war,

^A Ibid.^B Ibid.

war, that Rice now made him a voluntary offer of his liberty, provided he would unite with him against king Henry. Fitz-Stephen, though nearly allied to this chief by his mother's side, was yet utterly averse from such a service. His Father was a Norman, and he himself, of consequence, attached to the interests of the English monarch. Solicitous at the same time, to regain his liberty, he represented to Fitz-Griffith, that although he could not take arms against his liege-lord he was yet willing to decline all part in the projected contest; that the Irish prince solicited assistance; that he would gladly hazard his life and fortune in a foreign land, so as not to oppose, since he could not assist him. These instances were urgently enforced by the bishop and by Maurice Fitz-Gerald, maternal brother to Fitz-Stephen, a lord of distinguished worth and valour, who with some other adventurous knights of Wales now consented to take part in the Irish expedition. Robert, thus set at liberty, convenanted to engage with all his followers in the service of Dermot, who on his part promised to cede to the two principle leaders, Fitz-Stephen and Fitz-Gerald, the entire dominion of the town of Wexford, with a large adjoining territory, as soon as by their assistance he should be reinstated in his rights.

SUCH was the original scheme of an invasion, which in the event proved of so great importance. An odious fugitive, driven from his province by faction and revenge, gains a few adventurers in Wales, whom youthful valour or distress of fortune led into Ireland, in hopes of some advantageous settlements. Dermot, who no doubt, encouraged his new allies by the assurance of a powerful reinforcement

forcement of his countrymen, was obliged to affect impatience to depart, and to provide for their reception. He paid his vows in the church of St. David, embarked, landed in Ireland, passed without discovery through the quarters of his enemies, arrived at Ferns, and was entertained and concealed in the monastery which he himself had erected; waiting impatiently for the return of spring, when the English powers were to come to his assistance*. To the clergy he took care to magnify his gracious reception by king Henry, the dispositions of the English in his favour, and the number, force, and valour of the confederates he expected. The intelligence was industriously spread abroad, and served to animate his adherents; who incautiously crowded in considerable numbers to their old master, and received his assurances of a speedy and effectual support. As the secret of his return could not be long concealed, he assumed the appearance of the utmost confidence. He even marched at the head of his adherents, and possessed him of a part of his dominions called Hi-Kenselagh. Yet secretly distracted and terrified, tormented by delay, and dreading a disappointment, he dispatched Regan†, his faithful domestic into England, to hasten the succours already promised, and to solicit others, with an assurance of rich settlements and large rewards to all adventurers.

RODERIC‡, who was still busily employed in establishing his authority, confirming his adherents, and terrifying his secret enemies, was not long uninformed of the return of Dermot. Fame magnified the force he had collected, and converted a few followers of Wales, who embarked with

D 1169.

T Ann. 4 Mag. MSS.

x M. Regan.

z Ann. 4 Mag. Ann. Ult. Ann. Tigern. Contin. Ann. Anon. MSS.

with this prince, into an army of foreigners. Possibly the new chieftain of Leinster was author of this report, as he seems to have found no resources in his own valour and abilities, but to have relied entirely on the protection of Roderic. The monarch had lately obliged the northern chieftains, whom he most suspected, to acknowledge his supremacy; and was now impatient to regulate the disorders both of Meath and Thomond, in each of which provinces the violence of local feuds and factions had ended in the murder of the reigning princes. Yet still resolving to chastise the insolence of the Leinster chief, he suddenly collected some forces, and with his faithful associate O'Ruarc marched into the country of Hi-Kenselagh.

DERMOD, terrified at this incursion of his inveterate enemies fled into his woods for shelter; and favoured by the advantage of situation, made a shew of resistance, and even skirmished with the enemy, without any considerable disadvantage or disgrace. In the first action the forces of Connaught were repelled with some loss: another battle ensued, in which the Tainist, or successor elect of O'Ruarc, fell; and on the part of Dermot, a young lord of Wales, whom the Irish annals in the style of their nation, call a king's son, together with others of inferiour note, were killed. But this chieftain, sensible of his own weakness, and the necessity of amusing his assailants, artfully proposed to treat, made solemn professions of the most abject submission to Roderic, and formally renounced his claim to the government of Leinster; requesting, as an object of compassion, to be allowed to retain ten cantreds only of the province, which

which he promised to hold in absolute dependence upon Roderic, and in perfect submission to that monarch. To him he tendered seven hostages as a surety for his obedience; and to O'Ruarc one hundred ounces of Gold, as an inducement to bury all old animosities in oblivion, and to grant his favour and protection to an unhappy prince, whom he could no longer consider as a rival, divested, as he was, of all the ancient rights and honours of his family. Roderic, intent on objects apparently more important, accepted his insidious submission; consented to remit this small portion of territory to Dermot, received his hostages, and hastened to make the necessary dispositions in other provinces.

BUT the period at length arrived, when Dermot was to discover his insincerity, and to assert, at the head of an army, the rights he had so solemnly relinquished. Robert Fitz-Stephen^s had collected his forces, consisting of thirty knights, sixty men in armour, and three hundred archers, all chosen men of Wales, and embarking in three ships about the beginning of the month of May, in the year eleven hundred and seventy, arrived at a creek called the Ban, near the City of Wexford. With these came Hervey of Mountmorres, not with any military train, but as the emissary of his nephew the earl of Chepstow, to survey the country, and to report its state and circumstances to Richard, so as to direct him in his intended enterprize. This troop was the very next day reinforced by Maurice of Pendergast, a valliant Welchman, at the head of ten knights and two hundred archers. The commotion which was naturally produced through the adjacent

adjacent country by the landing of a foreign force, served to alarm the Britons, who, before they adventured to march forward, sent immediately to Dermot to notify their arrival, and to demand his assistance. The Irish prince was filled with the utmost exultation. Numbers of his subjects, who had abandoned him in his distress, considered this event as a certain assurance of his speedy restoration, and now crowded eagerly to his standard. He instantly sent five hundred men, headed by his natural son Donald, a youth of distinguished bravery, to join the invaders. He himself soon followed, received his foreign allies with every expression of joy and affection, renewed those promises he had made in England; and their mutual stipulations being adjusted, and ratified with all due solemnity, they proceeded to concert the operations of war, and the measures most effectual for their own interests and the service of the prince of Leinster.

It was resolved to march to Wexford^A, a city about twelve miles distant from their place of landing, the reduction of which was an object of great importance, and of which Fitz-Stephen was by treaty to become possessor. It was garrisoned by a body of Irish and Ostmen as they were called, men of violent and undisciplined bravery, who marched out boldly to meet their assailants. But when they came to view the British forces, whose numbers they had despised, they found an enemy quite different from those they had hitherto encountered; no disordered crowd, but a regular and well-appointed body, whose barbed horses, shining armour, regular discipline, and composure, formed

^A Girald. Camb.

formed a new and terrifying spectacle to these natives. They declined the engagement; yet still resolving to defend their city even to the last extremity, they set fire to the suburbs and adjacent villages, and retired within their walls.

FITZ-STEPHEN and his associates, encouraged by this retreat, advanced with the greater confidence, led up their forces to the walls, and making the necessary dispositions^c, proceeded to a vigorous assault, assured of immediate victory. But the garrison, on their part, made an obstinate defence: and after many efforts of valour, the Britons had the mortification to find themselves obliged to retire with the loss of eighteen of their number. Their Irish allies were confounded at the ill success of this first attempt: but the spirit of Fitz-Stephen was not so easily subdued. He drew off his men to the sea-shore, and to convince them that their sole reliance must be upon their valour, he set fire to his own transports among other vessels which lay at anchor; and the next day, having first ordered divine service to be performed in his camp, with all solemnity, he disposed his forces with greater care and circumspection, and again led them to the assault, animated by devotion, impatient of their late disgrace, and convinced of the necessity of conquering.

THEIR motions had not been unobserved by the garrison^d. These men, who were accustomed to see contests finally decided by the success of one vigorous impression, were astonished at this persevering resolution. The Clergy in particular were terrified, and made the most passionate remonstrances against an opposition which must prove fatal to

to all within the walls. It was at length agreed to treat with the besiegers : and a deputation of the principal inhabitants, with two reverend bishops at their head were sent to settle the terms of capitulation. They proposed that Wexford should be surrendered to Dermot, that all the inhabitants should acknowledge him as their sovereign, be admitted to renew their oaths of allegiance, and received into his service; and that four principal citizens should become hostages for the peaceable submission and fidelity of the Wexfordians. The insolence, resentment, and suspicions of Dermot protracted this treaty for three days ; when the authority of his prelates and the advice of his foreign allies at length prevailed. He accepted the submission of his repenting subjects, and entered Wexford in triumph. And now, to demonstrate his gratitude and good faith, Fitz-Stephen and Fitz-Gerald, whose speedy arrival was expected, were jointly invested with the lordship of this city and its domain. Hervey of Mountmorres also was declared lord of two considerable districts on the coast, between Wexford and Waterford, in order to gratify his nephew earl Richard, and to convince him of the advantages to be gained in the service of the prince of Leinster. Here then was the first colony of British inhabitants planted by these lords ; and here they remained for many years distinguished from the natives, in their manners and language ; nor even at this day, after so many various changes and revolutions, are they completely blended with the original inhabitants.

AFTER a few days residence at Wexford^e, Dermot led the British forces to his usual abode
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at Ferns, where three weeks were spent in refreshing the soldiers, feasting their commanders, and concerting their future operations. By the accession of the garrison, his army was now encreased to three thousand men, exclusive of his foreign forces : and revenge no less than policy determined him to make that part of Leinster called Ossory the seat of war. The lord of this district had not only revolted from Dermot in his distress, and united with Roderic, but had formerly possessed himself of a son of the prince of Leinster, either as an hostage or a visitor at his court ; and conceiving some suspicions of him as holding an unlawful intercourse with his wife, seized him in the rage of jealousy, and with a cruelty not then peculiar to Ireland, ordered his eyes to be put out. The unhappy youth expired under the operation ; and the father harboured the most violent and implacable resentment, which he now determined that the prince of Ossory should feel. He assembled the British leaders, pathetically related the injury he had received from this chieftain, the most malignant of his rebellious subjects, whom his honour and his interest equally obliged him to reduce, without delay ; observed that his whole reliance was on their conduct and valour, which his countrymen were now taught to dread ; and entreated their concurrence in his intended expedition into Ossory, where the very terror of the English name assured them of an easy victory. To this they readily replied, that the very purpose of their expedition was to restore him to his dignity and authority, and that it was his part to direct their operations.

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THE fame of this intended expedition was soon spread abroad ^A, and the Ossorians roused by the dreadful intelligence that Dermot prepared to spread fire and slaughter through their territory, their undaunted prince marched to his frontier at the head of a considerable force, amounting to five thousand men; and, strongly entrenched amidst woods and morasses, waited the approach of his invaders. The onset was violent, and sustained with the utmost firmness: the efforts of the Britons were repeatedly foiled and repelled; till the Ossorians, transported by the ardour of victory, quitted their advantageous situation, and poured down rashly into the plain, in pursuit of an enemy who fled on purpose to betray them into this fatal error. Their disordered numbers were here opposed to the British cavalry, conducted by a skilful general; and the contest was speedily decided. The Ossorians were driven off the field, and vigourously pursued till the victors in their turn were, by their ignorance of the country, betrayed into a dangerous situation, amidst morasses, where their heavy armed cavalry could not act. Dermot apprised them of this danger in due time; for the enemy were again collecting, and prepared to renew the engagement with an appearance so formidable, that his Irish forces could not dissemble their sense of the approaching danger. Unexperienced in the artifices of war, they attributed the quickness of the foreigners in retiring before the enemy to the want of courage, and separated themselves from a body, who, they said, could run like the wind^N: while Dermot on his part began to suspect that the men of Wexford intended to take this opportunity of deserting to the enemy; and therefore, for

for his greater safety, joined the British battalion. But the conduct and resolution of his allies prevented the pernicious effects of these suspicions, and once more prevailed over undisciplined and inexperienced numbers. They again suffered themselves to be driven through the defiles and morasses, to the plain, firm, and open ground; then advanced vigourously; while a select body, placed in ambush for this purpose, charged the enemy in the rear. The Ossorians fled on all sides; and the Irish in the service of Dermot pursued, and completed the rout. They returned from the carnage laden with three hundred heads of the slaughtered enemy, which they presented to their prince. If we may believe Giraldus^d, he turned and examined them distinctly, and in all the infernal triumph of revenge clasped his hands passionately, and returned thanks to heaven. The historian adds a circumstance too horrid to be believed, or even mentioned, but with reluctance; that having discovered in this bleeding heap the head of one of his mortal foes, the monster seized it, fastened his teeth upon the ghastly visage, and mangled it in the phrenzy of savage rage and malice. Surely the humane and generous Britons could not have been witnesses of such an action!

THE British commanders would gladly have improved this victory, by keeping the field until the prince of Ossory should be completely reduced^e, rather than incur the danger of being again attacked in their retreat. But they were now in the service of a prince used to another kind of war. He had defeated his enemy, ravaged and burnt his territory; and contented for the present with such

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success, he once more led his army back to Ferns ; where his vassal lords attended him in his good fortune, to deprecate his resentment, and renew their engagements. Those who still refused to submit were harassed by his incursions., Decies, the territory of O'Faolan, and that part of Wicklow, known by the name of Glandelagh, felt the utmost fury of his ravages. The prince of Offory, notwithstanding his defeat, still dared to appear in arms and defy the power of Dermot, and was therefore exposed to a second invasion. Conscious that his original offence could not readily admit of an accommodation, he prepared for an obstinate and desperate resistance. For three days he maintained his post against the repeated assaults of his invaders : and though his forces were at length broken, they were by no means subdued, but still waited for a fair occasion of making head against an enemy, who allowed them to re-assemble, by retiring when the victory was once obtained.

A FORTUNATE incident soon encouraged the Offorians to become invaders in their turn^c. Dermot by his insolence or neglect had provoked Maurice of Prendergast to renounce his service ; and, by attempting to prevent his return into Wales, forced this lord with his whole troop to follow the insidious advice of the Wexfordians, and to unite with the prince of Offory. So formidable an opinion had been entertained in Leinster of the English prowess, and so great expectations were formed from such a slender re-inforcement, that this chieftain was now emboldened to make an inroad into the territories of Dermot. He harassed his tributaries, and ravaged his country ; but

but Prendergast was too sensible of the advantages of the prince of Leinster to suffer his new associate to meet him in the field : especially as the loss sustained by his own defection was now supplied by the arrival of Maurice Fitz-Gerald, who landed at Wexford with his powers, consisting of ten knights, thirty horsemen, and one hundred archers.

THE Ossorian, though not strong enough to engage in any enterprize of real consequence, was yet desirous to retain Prendergast in his service : and when this commander, disgusted at his new alliance, and dreading treachery from the Irish of Ossory, determined once again to return to Wales, he even attempted to oppose his passage by force. The address and valour of Maurice extricated him from the danger, and secured his retreat : and the prince of Ossory soon found it necessary to amuse his implacable enemy by a submission, which with some reluctance Dermot at length sullenly accepted.

WHILE this prince proceeded thus successfully in reducing his revolted subjects, Roderic, the Irish monarch, was busily engaged in measures calculated for intimidating his rivals and enemies, and supporting the dignity of his station. The insincere submissions of many, the most powerful of the Irish dynasts, and the internal disorders of different provinces, called him off from the apparently less interesting affairs of Leinster, and kept him in perpetual agitation. To give his sovereignty the greater dignity and respect, he repeatedly summoned the estates of the nation, revived such ancient institutions as served to strike the multitude

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with lively impressions of his power and grandeur ; ordained new laws, bestowed his graces upon the clergy, regulated their seminaries, made additional donations to the professors of the learning of his days, and by every popular measure studied to gain the respect, and command the obedience of his vassals. The commotions of Leinster he affected to consider as merely local, a contest between an inferiour prince and his tributaries, and the arrival of foreigners to the assistance of Dermod as an incident totally unimportant. The nation had been for ages used to see petty troops of foreigners engage in the service of some provincial chieftain, who paid and dismissed them when his contest was decided. But the fame of the exploits and progress of these warlike Britons began to spread through the island, and was received not without surprize and terrour. The defeat of the Ossorians, who had been the declared partizans of Roderic, and Dermod's contemptuous violation of his treaty, seemed to cast a shade of dishonour upon the government of this monarch, and to demand his immediate and vigorous interposition. And as other provinces were now composed, and that the affairs of Leinster could not be neglected without the utmost disgrace to his authority, he determined to march, in all the majesty and terrour of an offended sovereign, against Dermod and his foreigners, before they were enabled by any additional reinforcements to spread the flames of war still further.

THE several chieftains were summoned to attend his standard, their vassals were collected ; the whole united army was assembled and reviewed at Tarah, the renowned seat of ancient Irish grandeur ; and

and attended their monarch to Dublin^a. Here were discovered the first symptoms of that internal weakness which lay concealed under this parade and ostentation. The northern chieftains, who yielded to none of their countrymen in military honour, had marched thus far, under the command of Roderic, with their numerous and warlike troops. But many of these chieftains, he knew, paid him a reluctant and insidious obedience, and were secretly favourers of the rival family of Hi-Nial. Dreading this insincerity, and justly suspecting that on some critical emergency they might avow their disaffection, and perhaps desert to the enemy, he dismissed the Northern forces, as if the present service was not sufficiently important to require their concurrence, or to detain them from their own habitations and concerns. His provincial troops, those of O'Ruarc, those of Thomond, and some from the lords of Leinster, who still opposed their chieftain, formed an army greatly superiour to the forces he was to encounter: and Dermot had scarcely received the news of this formidable confederacy, when he was again informed that the united powers of the monarch had actually entered his territories, and commenced hostilities.

THIS first appearance of a reverse of fortune served to convert the insolence of his success into the most abject and unmanly dismay. And, to complete his confusion, numbers of his own vassals^r, who had but just now bound themselves to his service by the most solemn oaths, made a faithless revolt to the enemy: and even those, who had

^a Ann. 4 Mag. MSS. Ann. Ult. Ann. Tigern. Contin. MSS.

^r Girald. Camb. Stanih.

had not yet deserted, he had too good reason to suspect. In this, which he regarded as the extremity of distress, he lost all hopes, even in his British allies; and communicated his intelligence to their leaders with the dejection of a man totally desperate. Fitz-Stephen is said to have endeavoured to allay these terrors; and to have represented, with some warmth, that a prince should not only display his personal bravery in the field, but possess his mind with that firmness and magnanimity which might enable him to encounter the severest distress; that a steady and well-collected mind could not fail of its resources, even in the most alarming events: at worst, an honourable death was the last glorious resource of an undaunted spirit; the Britains were still faithful to his cause, ready to share his fortunes, the friends of his distress, as well as of his prosperity. Such remonstrances were succeeded by a serious deliberation on the measures necessary for their defence. As the enemy was so superiour in numbers, it was resolved to retire to a station near Ferns, difficult and dangerous of access, surrounded with deep and impassable woods, precipices, and morasses; which by art and labour was soon rendered impregnable to an enemy more distinguished by rude valour than by military skill. And thus entrenched and fortified, they seemed to bid defiance to the invaders.

RODERIC considered their present advantage of situation, the danger of attacking an enemy thus stationed, which had frequently been experienced in all the Irish wars, the precarious event of battle, the fatal consequences to his authority from a defeat,

defeat, or even from the least disgrace which might attend his arms; and determined to try every expedient of policy, before he had recourse to the final decision of the sword. His first attempt was to prevail upon the British forces to detach themselves from Dermot: and for this purpose, by his deputies, he is said to have represented to Fitz-Stephen the injustice of his present conduct in leading an army into a strange country, where he had no claims or pretensions to support, in seizing lands and projecting settlements, when the rightful possessors, far from entertaining any hostile dispositions to his followers, were still contented that the Britons should be suffered to depart unmolested: that it was shameful for a brave and generous people to espouse the odious cause of a tyrant and adulterer; unreasonable to involve themselves in the ruin now impending over him, and extravagant to suppose that the forces of an Irish monarch could not crush an enemy in his distress, whom they had successfully attacked in the midst of his prosperity, and driven into abject banishment, in despite of his most vigorous efforts: that their only just and reasonable measure was to retire in peace, and leave him to his fate; especially as Roderic consented not only to allow them a secure departure, but to defray the expences of their voyage.

IN these overtures Fitz-Stephen readily discovered the diffidence and timidity by which they had been dictated, and therefore was the more emboldened to reject them. He replied, that the Britons had not come to invade the rights of others, but to take possession of their own, which they claimed by treaty with the king of Leinster; to him they stood engaged by every tie of justice and honour;

nor

nor was it their custom to forsake their allies on the first alarm of opposition, or to be seduced from their attachments by a bribe : that soldiers were not used to listen with severity to old tales of any man's amours ; nor could Roderic himself, whose spurious issue was well known, boast of consummate chastity : that he and his associates were utterly at a loss to conceive the purpose of this deputation : his advice or friendship they neither wanted nor accepted ; if he ventured to predict the event of the present contest, they had no reliance on his sagacity ; if he commanded as a monarch, they were strangers to his authority ; if he threatened as an enemy, they defied his power.

THE deputies thus unsuccessful in their first attempt^o, addressed themselves in the next place to Dermod. They called upon him, in the name of their master, to detach himself from the strangers, to unite with his countrymen, and acknowledge his allegiance to the king of Connaught. On this condition they assured him that he should be established in his rights ; that his sovereign was even ready to defend him against the danger of his present unnatural alliance : that the Britons meant but to improve the pretence which he had precipitately afforded them, to establish a permanent and powerful settlement in Leinster ; to strengthen themselves gradually by a succession of new adventurers, so as to drive him from his territories ; to reduce the whole province to a state of slavish dependence, and possibly to extend their power yet further : that his interest and his honour, the duty which he owed to himself, to his sovereign, and to his country, obliged him to turn his arms against the

the common enemy, and to drive away these insidious invaders. Should he prove insensible to every just and generous motive, the monarch of Ireland was at hand, ready to chastise such treason, nor should his foreigners defend him against the just resentment of his countrymen.

DERMOD, who had learned resolution from his allies^r, received these propositions with the most insolent disdain. The deputies returned, and Roderic prepared for battle as his last resource, which was now expected, on both sides, not without the utmost anxiety for the event. It was usual for the Irish chieftians to harangue their forces before an engagement: and now when the onset was immediately expected, the leaders on each side strove to animate their troops by such arguments and motives as their cause afforded. We are told that Roderic laboured to paint the iniquities of Dermot in the most odious colours; inveighed against his former tyranny, his present malice, his infamous connexion with foreigners, and the injustice and danger of their attempt to gain a settlement in Ireland; encouraging his troops to display their native courage, that posterity might be instructed by their example, and roving adventurers for ever deterred from the like injurious attempts against their country. Dermot on his part was equally industrious to possess his people with the most unfavourable sentiments of Roderic, whom he represented as the ambitious and oppressive invader of his province. He himself, he observed, had taken arms merely in defence of his own rights and those of his subjects, and relying on their well-approved valour, he despised the numbers of his

^r Ibid.

his invader; while Fitz-Stephen contented himself with representing to his countrymen, that they were engaged in an honourable cause, that of supporting an injured prince, their friend and benefactor, who had given them valuable settlements, when distressed and neglected in their own country; and that their arms might open a way to acquisitions still more valuable and extensive, if they now exerted that valour which became their descent, and which had ever been the glory of Britons.

BUT in the midst of all this agitation^y, while the armies seemed on the point of a desperate encounter, the timid policy of Roderic was still predominant. One vigorous effort to crush these foreigners in the infancy of their enterprize, might have confounded all their expectations, deterred their countrymen from any like attempts, and prevented the momentous consequences of this apparently insignificant invasion. The future fate of Ireland hung on this critical moment: and it was at once decided: for Roderic listened to the suggestions of his clergy, and rather than hazard an engagement, consented to treat with a prince whose perfidy he had already experienced. His deputies were once more sent to Dermot, offered their propositions with less arrogance, and were heard with greater temper. The negotiation was protracted for a time, but, by the industry of the agents, and the mediation of the clergy, at length finally concluded. Dermot was allowed to proceed in the reduction of Leinster without any opposition from Roderic or his vassals. On his part he engaged to acknowledge the supremacy of Roderic,
and

and to pay him such service as monarchs of Ireland had usually claimed from inferiour princes. As a surety for the faithful performance of this article, his favourite son was delivered as an hostage to the king of Connaught. But in order to heal the wounds of civil discord, and to establish the present accommodation on the firmest basis, Roderic obliged himself to give his daughter in marriage to this youth, as soon as Leinster should be reduced, and the general peace of the island effectually restored. By a secret article Dermot engaged to dismiss the British forces immediately after the settlement of his province, and in the mean not to bring over any further reinforcements from England. He was bound by the most solemn oaths to the due observance of this treaty, which he determined to observe no longer than necessity or convenience might oblige him. And now Roderic drew off his army, leaving the prince of Leinster with his Britons at full liberty to extend their conquests unmolested.

FITZ-STEPHEN on his part was in the first place anxious to secure the possessions he had already acquiredⁿ; and justly dreading the instability of the men of Wexford, determined to build a fort to keep them in perpetual awe. He chose for his situation a place called Carrig, about two miles distant from the town, defended on two sides by a precipice, and on the others by a deep navigable river. Dermot in the mean time boiling with revenge, and impatient to take the advantage of his returning fortune, and to wreak his malice upon all his former enemies, now marked out Dublin as the scene of hostilities. This city was inhabited

inhabited principally by Ostmen, whom the convenience of commerce had invited thither, and who, as the power of the prince of Leinster prevailed or declined, either lived under his dominion, or asserted their independence. The father of Dermot had so provoked them by severity and tyranny, that when he ventured within their walls they treacherously murdered him, and, to express the greater abhorrence and contempt, interred his body with the carcass of a dog. This inhuman outrage was followed by a revolt, and ever since the first misfortunes of Dermot they had acknowledged no other lord but their own Danish governor called Hesculph Mac-Torcal. Dermot had now power to execute his revenge for the murder of his father, and to punish their defiance of his own authority. Leaving Fitz-Stephen and his party to complete their works, he led his Irish, together with the rest of his British forces under the command of Fitz-Gerald, into the territories of Dublin, where he spread fire and slaughter with the most unrelenting fury. The improvident citizens, terrified at the severity of this execution, which they were utterly unprepared to oppose, had no other part to take but that of deprecating the resentment of their invader. They consented to lay down their arms, and return to their allegiance. And Fitz-Gerald himself, affected by their submission, became intercessor with the prince of Leinster, who for the present was sufficiently gratified by this their abasement, admitted them to take the oaths of fidelity, and received their hostages, leaving their former governor still to command the city in his name, and as his vassal.

WHILE

WHILE Dermod was employed in this expedition, a trivial incident served to discover his implacable aversion to Roderic, and his impatience to break through his late engagements. A short time before the arrival of the British troops^r, Donald O'Brien had, on the death of his father, assumed the government of Thomond, in which he was confirmed by the authority of Roderic, with whom he remained in strict connection, attending him in all his expeditions, till the restoration of Dermod, the fame of his foreign auxiliaries, and above all the late inglorious conduct of his sovereign determined him to revolt; and entering into an alliance with the prince of Leinster, which was cemented by the marriage of one of his daughters, he bad defiance to the power of Connaught. Roderic endeavoured to reduce this rebellious vassal, who sought, and instantly obtained assistance from his new ally. Dermod, on the first notice of his danger, was impatient to insult the pride of Roderic, and to resist that sovereign authority which he was but now sworn to support. He dispatched an emissary to Fitz-Stephen^c, earnestly requesting him to march to the assistance of his son-in-law. The British chief readily obeyed: and Roderic alarmed at the intelligence of a reinforcement, whose numbers were industriously magnified, had the mortification to find it necessary to retire, leaving his enemies to triumph over his disappointment and disgrace.

THUS we find the first British adventurers successful in their attempts to reinstate the Irish chieftain, in whose service they had engaged, peaceably settled in his province, left to secure and enjoy

enjoy the possessions he had bestowed, and still ready to espouse his quarrels. This, which is sometimes represented as an astonishing instance of British proofs and Irish weakness, appears, when fairly examined, neither wonderful nor extraordinary. To affirm that the followers of Fitz-Stephen and Fitz-Gerald composed a force which nothing in Ireland was able to withstand, is to account for their success in such a manner as bespeaks an easy and pliant belief, but does no honour to the valour and abilities of these gallant knights. The truth is, they were withstood by those immediately affected by their invasion with all the spirit of undisciplined and undirected valour; and where the numbers on each side were nearly equal, the Irish brought both their courage and conduct to a severe trial. The power of the nation they did not contend with; and, however we may conceive or speak of Ireland as one collected state, the Irish of these days had but faint ideas of a national cause or a national force. Their tribes were each zealous for their own interest or the honour of their own arms; but little concerned about the fortune of a distant province, and little affected by the disgrace or defeat of any chieftain but their own. They followed Roderic because they recognized his authority, or feared his power, not to repel an invasion of Ireland, but to reduce his disobedient vassal: and when this was affected, either by arms or negotiation, they were not at all concerned about the administration of that vassal's province, or any dispositions of his territory. The settlement of a Welch colony in Leinster was an incident neither interesting nor alarming to any, except perhaps a few of most reflection and discernment.

Even the Irish annalists speak with a careless indifference of this event, while they dwell upon the provincial wars and contests subsisting in other quarters of the island, and even upon the insignificant affairs of their church, as objects much more important. Had these first adventurers conceived that they had nothing more to do but to march through the land, and terrify a whole nation of timid savages by the glitter of their armour, they must have speedily experienced the effects of such romantic madness. But their valour was happily directed by prudence and circumspection, and hence they gradually prevailed over their enemies, no less brave, but unexperienced, improvident,* and disunited.



C H A P. II.

Dermod aspires to the monarchy of Ireland.—Encouraged by the British leaders.—Again applies to the earl of Chepstow—who is discouraged by Henry—prepares for an expedition into Ireland.—Arrival of Raymond le Gros.—His victory.—cruel execution of his prisoners.—Landing of earl Richard.—Siege of Waterford.—Marriage of the earl.—March to Dublin.—Roderic takes arms.—skirmishes, and retires.—Dublin stormed in the midst of a treaty.—Escape of Hesculph.—Invasion of Meath.—Embassy of Roderic.—Cruel execution of the Leinster hostages.—Synod convened at Armagh.—Henry alarmed at the progress of Strongbow.—His proclamation.—Raymond dispatched to the king—Death of Dermod—its consequences.—Britons deserted—distressed.—Defeat and death of Hesculph.—Zeal and vigour of archbishop Lawrence.—Dublin invested by the Irish confederates.—Fitz-Stephen besieged at Carrig.—Strongbow treats with Roderic.—Terms of capitulation proposed.—Desperate effort of the Britons.—Retreat of the confederates.—Fitz-Stephen deceived—surrenders—cruelty of his enemies.—Strongbow marches to Wexford.—Is attacked at Hi-drone.—Desists from his attempt to relieve Fitz-Stephen.—Goes to Waterford.—Meditates an invasion of Ossory.—Generosity of Prendergast.—Strongbow exercises a royal sovereignty in Leinster.—Is summoned to appear before king Henry.—Is reconciled to the king.—Preparations for his invasion.—Defeat of O'Ruarc. Deputation of the Wexfordians.—Artfully received by Henry.

DERMOD

DERMOD, now established in the full and peaceable possession of his province, and acknowledged and obeyed as the rightful prince of Leinsterⁿ, could plead no just pretence for employing his British auxiliaries any longer. But success enlarged his views, and enflamed his passions: and the abandoned fugitive, suddenly restored to his state and power, burning with revenge, and intoxicated by ambition, determined to contend with Roderic for the monarchy of Ireland.

He communicated his bold design to the British leaders, on whose attachment he justly placed his chief reliance^r. He told them, that his antient rights, had not yet been completely recovered; that the dominion of Connaught, a rich and extensive province, which would afford the amplest and most honourable settlements to his adherents, had been formerly wrested from his family, and was now usurped by his mortal enemy; he laboured to possess them with magnificent expectations, if they would assist him in asserting all his claims: and he addressed himself to those who were desirous to engage him in such pursuits. They commended the design he had conceived, and applauded his generous spirit; but, as the attempt was arduous, as he must support a contest with superiour numbers, and warlike chieftains, and as his British forces, however distinguished by discipline and valour, were yet too few to engage in an extensive enterprize, they advised him for the present to conceal his intentions, till he could obtain more powerful reinforcements from England; which they pressed him to solicit by every possible means, as his sure support against the

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boldest

boldest opposition of his enemies. Dermot, still more enflamed by this encouragement, pathetically entreated Fitz-Stephen and Fitz-Gerald to employ their influence in gaining an additional number of British forces. He repeated and enforced his solicitations, he lavished his promises, and even offered his daughter in marriage to each successively, without the least regard to his former engagement. But these lords, who were already married, and possibly had already brought all the forces they could command, advised him to apply once more to the earl of Chepstow, who probably was well disposed, and certainly enabled to lead such an army into Ireland, as might in the end exalt him to the sovereignty of the whole nation.

DERMOT approved of this advice^r, and without further delay dispatched his emissaries with letters to earl Richard, in which he gently complained of his absence, and pressed him earnestly to the long-expected performance of his promise. He had now, he observed, by the assistance of those friends he had already gained from England, recovered the possession of his own province; and wanted but the presence of the earl to reduce his enemies completely, and extend his sovereignty even over the whole island. His other adherents had supported the weight of his distress, and were amply rewarded for their services; he now called on him to take the less hazardous and more pleasing part, that of sharing and extending his good fortune: wealth and honour were prepared for him; a beautiful bride and a princely dowry waited his acceptance.

EARL

r Girald. Camb.

EARL Richard had heard of the successes of his countrymen, and readily determined to obey this invitation^k. Neglected by his prince, oppressed by his necessities, and flattered by the prospect of valuable acquisitions in Ireland, he instantly repaired to king Henry; represented his distress, and entreated the royal favour to re-instate him in his former affluence, at least to permit him to court the return of fortune, by hazarding his life in the service of the prince of Leinster. Henry, who by no means wished that his subjects should make too considerable a progress in Ireland, much less that the reduction of this country should be gradually effected, without his interposition, was not desirous that the present British adventurers should gain any additional reinforcements: yet, without disavowing his former general licence, or directly forbidding the earl to pursue his intended enterprize, he at first detained him by various pretences, without any explicit answer to his petition. When his instances were renewed, he affected to commend his martial spirit, but treated his scheme of an adventure into Ireland with contempt and ridicule. Richard was still importunate; till the king passionately commanded him to be gone, with some equivocal expressions which might be understood as an assent to his request. The earl determined to understand his liege-lord in this manner, departed, and prepared for his expedition with all imaginable vigour.

It was now winter, when no embarkation could be safely made. But he employed this interval so diligently and effectually, that in the ensuing spring his preparations were complete^l; and his domestic

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friend

^k Ibid.^l Girald. Camb.

friend, Raymond Le Gros, the near kinsman of Fitz-Stephen and Fitz-Gerald, first embarked with ten knights and seventy archers as an advanced guard. With these came Hervey of Mountmorres, who had returned to Wales, probably to confer with earl Richard, and was now attended into Ireland by a small train. This little company landed, in the month of May", at a place called by the old historians Dondonolf, near Waterford; and for their immediate security cast up an intrenchment, and raised a temporary fort. Nor was the precaution useless; for this new debarkation, which was justly attributed to the practices of Dermod, seemed so flagrant a violation of his treaty, and indicated so confirmed a resolution in this chieftain to over-run his country with foreigners, that the inhabitants of Waterford, and those of the Decies instantly formed a tumultuary troop, and marched to expel these invaders. The Britons prepared to meet them; but when they had surveyed their formidable superiority of numbers, retired to their fort. The Irish pressed closely upon them, and some were even within their gates, when Raymond boldly assailed and slew their leader. His associates were animated by this example; the enemy retired, and stood suspended. Fortunately the Britons had collected from the adjacent country a numerous herd of cattle for their subsistence"; and these Raymond ordered to be driven with all possible fury against the enemy. The beasts rushed forward with irresistible violence, and cast the astonished Irish into the utmost confusion. The invaders seized the favourable moment, marched out against their disordered numbers, gained an immediate victory, pursued,

perſued, with conſiderable ſlaughter, and, as they were too few to make any great number of priſoners, precipitated the flying enemy into the ſea with an hardened indifference. They returned, however, to the fort with ſeventy captives^r, all principal citizens of Waterford, who offered large ſums for their ranſom, and even promiſed that the city ſhould be ſurrendered, as the purchaſe of their liberty. If we are to believe Cambrenſis, Raymond was diſpoſed to accept their offer. He pleaded, that they had fought in a fair and honourable cauſe, the defence of their territory, and therefore were to be treated in their diſtreſs with courteſy and pity. Hervey on the other hand repreſented the danger of ſtrengthening their enemies already too powerful, the neceſſity of ſtriking terror into the inhabitants, and their averſion to the Britons, to whom they never would ſubmit, till broken by rigour and ſeverity. Unhappily this cruel policy prevailed, and the glory of their extraordinary ſucceſs was ſullied by the execution of theſe wretched captives. An act of deliberate barbarity, it might be ſuppoſed, would have provoked the Iriſh to a ſevere revenge; but, whether they were uninformed of the fate of their countrymen, or intimidated, they ſuffered theſe merciless invaders to maintain their ſtation unmoleſted, and wait for the arrival of their associates.

AND now earl Richard, more generally known by the name of Strongbow, from his extraordinary feats of archery, led his vaſſals through Wales, increaſed them by new adventurers from this warlike country^s, and was on the point of embarking when he was ſurprized by a poſitive command

^r Girald. Camb.

^s Gul. Neubrig.

mand from Henry to desist from his intended enterprize, on pain of forfeiture of his lands and honours, as a rebel against his sovereign. He had proceeded too far, and dwelt too long upon the thoughts of acquiring extensive and valuable possessions in Ireland, to acquiesce in this mortifying prohibition. He either affected to doubt of the authority by which the mandate was delivered, or ventured openly to renounce it. He hoped to render himself independent of the king, or at least to find some means of deprecating his resentment*. He set sail from Milford in the month of August, and on the eve of the feast of St. Bartholemew landed at Waterford, with two hundred knights, and about twelve hundred infantry, all chosen and well-appointed soldiers. These were instantly joined by Raymond and his party, and the very next morning they marched in military array to attack the city.

WATERFORD, which was inhabited principally by Ostmen^r, and governed by two Danish lords, had, on the first alarm of this invasion, received considerable reinforcements from the neighbouring chieftains, and prepared for a vigorous defence. The Britons were beaten off, returned to the assault, and were again forced to retire; when Raymond, perceiving in the eastern angle a small house of timber projecting beyond the walls, and supported on the outside by posts, prevailed on his countrymen to make a third attempt, and to bend the force of their assault against this very quarter. They began with hewing down the posts; the house fell, and drew with it such a portion of the walls as made a breach sufficiently practicable.

The

* Girald. Camb.

r Regan. Girald. Camb.

The besiegers rushed in, and bearing down all opposition, were soon left at liberty to glut their vengeance upon those who had presumed to make a brave defence against the unprovoked invaders of their lives and properties. The whole city was made a scene of promiscuous carnage, without mercy or distinction. Reginhald, one of the Danish governours, and O'Faolan, prince of Decies, with his son, were seized^x, and just on the point of being made victims to the insolent cruelty of the conquerors, when the sudden arrival of Dermot and his troop put an end to the slaughter^y. Even this cruel chieftain had now the merit of interposing, to prevent the deliberate butchery of his countrymen. He embraced his new associates, and presented his daughter Eva to her intended spouse. When the clamour of war had been silenced, and the peace of the city re-established, he insisted, with an ostentation of good faith and gratitude, that her marriage with earl Strongbow should be immediately solemnized. Their hands being joined, and the nuptials celebrated, Dermot and his confederates proceed to settle their military operations, and leaving a garrison at Waterford, bend their course towards Dublin,

THE men of Dublin had probably discovered some recent disaffection to the king of Leinster, which his old resentments might have magnified into an avowed rebellion. In accepting their late submission he had but suspended his revenge; and now, when strengthened by so powerful a reinforcement, he resolved to punish their real or pretended revolt, as the fairest pretence for employing and displaying his new forces, so as to strike general
terror,

^x Ann. 4 Mag. MSS.

^y Girald. Camb.

terror, and at the same time to lead them on gradually into the territories of his enemies. Roderic in the mean time, who had but too just reasons to consider the late treaty as totally dissolved, and whose interest and reputation, the surest basis of his sovereign dignity, called him forth to check the progress of these foreigners, once more took the field, and joined by the forces of O'Ruarc and O'Carrol, prince of Argial^A, marched to Clandalkan, a few miles southward of the city, as if determined to give battle to the confederates of Leinster. His numbers are rated, by those whom we may reasonably suspect of magnifying them, at 30,000 men^x. But though this account be evidently incredible, yet were they much superiour to those he was to encounter. But the Britons, who had by this time learned to despise the numbers of their Irish enemies, continued their march, and advanced resolutely upon Roderic. Milo de Cogan, a brave English knight, led the vanguard, composed of seven hundred British forces, and an Irish battalion commanded by Donald, that son of Dermod who served with such vigour in all his father's wars. The main body was formed of eight hundred British, commanded by Raymond Le Gros, and the chief part of the Irish troops led by the king of Leinster. Earl Strongbow followed in the rear with three hundred English and one thousand Irish forces. This regular disposition of a disciplined and well-appointed army formed a new and terrible spectacle to the tumultuous numbers of Roderic. Instead of coming to a regular engagement^y, they were contented with skirmishing for three days with the confederates ;
and

^A Ann. 4 Mag. MSS. Ann. var. MSS. ^x Regan.

^y Ann. 4 Mag. MSS.

and then, as if the services due to their sovereign were thus completely performed, they obliged him to dismiss them, and to retire into his own province, leaving the Ostmen of Dublin to sustain the whole fury of their besiegers.

THESE citizens, in the utmost consternation at the flight of Roderic, utterly unable to defend themselves against their implacable enemy, and still further confounded and distressed by an accidental fire, which had destroyed one of their principal gates, resolved, as their last resource, to avert the danger by a treaty. Their deputation, led by Lawrence their archbishop, a prelate highly revered for the dignity of his birth, as well as his exalted piety, repaired to Dermot, and laboured to allay his resentment. In the name of his fellow-citizens Lawrence expressed the utmost penitence for all past offences against their prince, promising for the future to adhere to his interests with the sincerest and most scrupulous allegiance; for which thirty hostages were offered as a surety. Dermot was intractable; and though the respect due to the character of this prelate did not permit him to avow his bloody intentions, yet difficulties and objections were repeatedly started to give some colour to his obstinate rejection of every overture. In the midst of these delays honour and good faith proved but a weak restraint against the fiery spirits of the Britons. Their younger and more adventurous commanders, pretending that the term of parly was expired, led their forces to the walls, and gave the assault, which the citizens neither expected nor were prepared to repel. Their streets were soon filled with slaughter: numbers plunged
into

into the river, to escape the fury of their pursuers, and were drowned. A considerable body of the inhabitants, however, with Hesculph their governor, had the good fortune to gain some vessels lying at anchor in the harbour, which conveyed them with their more valuable effects to the northern islands.

EARL Strongbow, now invested with the lordship of Dublin, appointed Milo de Cogan his governor; and proceeding directly with Dermot to the territories of Meath, over-ran the country, burning and slaughtering with the most unrelenting fury. The prince of this district had some time since been murdered by one of his kinsmen, who assumed his state and dignity*. Roderic determining to punish this outrage, marched into Meath, and expelled the usurper. He in revenge joined with the king of Leinster and his British allies, who thus had a plausible pretence for invading Meath in support of their new confederate. Roderic, on the other hand, who had bestowed the eastern part of Meath on O'Ruarc, and reserved the western to himself, was bound to support his own arrangements; nor could he look upon the progress of the Leinster forces without the most serious apprehensions for his own province, where the dissensions of his people, and the ambition and turbulence of his sons were raising the flame of civil war, while a powerful foreign enemy advanced fast upon his borders. But, as he was not strong enough to take the field, his deputies were sent to Dermot, who in the name of their monarch commanded him to retire. He was told, that, while he confined himself to the recovery of his
own

own dominions, he had not been opposed; but now, when contrary to his solemn engagements he had invited over new troops of foreigners, and employed them in the most cruel hostilities against his unoffending neighbours, it became the monarch of Ireland to remind him of his duty; which if he continued to violate, his son was in the hands of Roderic, and his life must answer for the perfidy and cruelty of his father. But natural affection had but little place in the breast of Dermod. His reply was full of insolence and disdain^c. He defied the power of Roderic, and renounced his authority; expressed the most careless indifference at the fate of his son, and the utmost scorn of the man, who presumed to dictate to his arms, and prescribe bounds to his excursions; openly avowing his pretensions to the dominion of Connaught, which he was determined to assert; that he claimed not Leinster only but all Ireland; nor should he lay down his arms till that kingdom universally acknowledged his jurisdiction.

THIS imperious answer was received with the vexation of impotent dignity insulted and contemned^d; and the unhappy youth his hostage felt the vengeance, which he could not point against its proper object: his head was instantly cut off. The Irish annalists speak in such terms of this hostage, the noblest and most amiable youth of Leinster, (so they call him) as plainly shew their detestation of this brutal cruelty of Roderic. They add, that on this occasion he also put to death a son of the gallant Donald Kevanagh, and one, scarcely less dear to him, the son of his fosterer, both of whom had been his hostages.

EVERY

EVERY day were now spread through the island fearful accounts of the power, progress, and devastations of these foreigners, the depopulation of whole districts, the miseries of the inhabitants, ravages, massacres, and all the affecting incidents of war, terrible in themselves, and magnified by report. The people were in dismay; their monarch had shrunk from the danger ignobly: they who were most exposed or threatened, when all human aid seemed desperate, turned their thoughts to heaven, and besought the clergy to devise some means for deprecating the divine wrath, which had thus visited their nation. The clergy, scarcely more enlightened than their ignorant flock, had formed some crude notions of the miraculous interpositions of Providence, and concluded, that the present calamity must be the consequence of such interposition, and ordained as a punishment of some particular offence. The laity were corrupt and vicious, and the clergy shared deeply in the vices of the time. Yet, utterly at a loss to conceive what this particular offence might be, which had brought down such an heavy judgment upon their land, they convened a formal synod at Armagh, to enquire into this interesting point, as if they were to be favoured with some extraordinary communications of the divine will. After a long and grave debate, it was suggested, and unanimously agreed by the synod, that the real cause of the divine displeasure, which Ireland now experienced, could be no other than their unchristian practice of purchasing and selling Englishmen as slaves, an iniquity which the Almighty now seemed to punish by English invaders, who threatened to reduce all Ireland to slavery. By the
spiritual

spiritual authority of the synod it was ordained, that every English bondsman should be immediately set at liberty. Whatever was the case in the Saxon times, their numbers at this period were probably not so considerable, nor the traffic general. Yet this solemn determination served to raise the people from their dejection, as they superstitiously conceived, that they had now discovered and removed the latent cause of their calamity.

AND in effect their affairs now assumed a more favourable aspectⁿ. Dermot, elated by his successful progress in Meath, insolently ventured with a detachment of his forces to pursue his enemy O'Ruarc into his territory of Breffney; where he was twice defeated, and obliged to consult his safety by a precipitate retreat. But what was of more consequence, the fame of the exploits and success of earl Strongbow had spread through England, and was conveyed to king Henry. He learned, that his subjects in Ireland had made a progress so rapid and so extensive, as seemed to promise a speedy reduction of the whole island, an achievement which he reserved for himself. Jealous of their success, and particularly of the growing power of Strongbow, who, by his alliances in England, his acquisitions, and his marriage in Ireland, might be enabled to defy his authorityⁿ, and soon obtain an independent sovereignty of formidable extent, he now affected the utmost indignation and resentment at those hostilities which his liegemen had presumed to carry on in Ireland. He issued his royal edict, strictly prohibiting any English vessel from passing into that island with men, arms, or provisions; and commanding

manding all his subjects, now resident in Ireland, of every order and degree, to return to their native country before the ensuing feast of Easter, on pain of forfeiting their lands, and being declared traitors.

NOTHING could be devised more distressing to the British adventurers than this severe and peremptory edict of their sovereign. They were cut off from all supplies in the midst of enraged enemies, and in danger of being forsaken by those who had attached themselves to their success. The fairest hopes they could entertain, if the king should prove implacable, were those of securing their retreat and retiring at the time prescribed, abandoning their new-acquired possessions, and loaded with disappointment and disgrace. Strongbow maturely revolved the danger, and the means of averting it. Well acquainted with the character of Henry^b, and no stranger to the real cause of his present resentment, he determined to send Raymond Le Gros, on whose prudence and fidelity he had the utmost reliance, with letters to the king now residing in Aquitaine. With the most humble and dutiful expressions of loyalty, he entreated, that his royal master would be pleased to allow him to give a favourable interpretation of his conduct, without listening to the envious representations of his enemies. He had engaged, he said, in the service of the prince of Leinster, his vassal, by his royal licence, as he conceived, and for the sole purpose of advancing his interests ; he and his fellow soldiers were fighting only for their sovereign, to reduce the stubborn spirits of the Irish to his obedience : whatever they had gained was gained for him, and should remain at his disposal

posal as the natural and rightful lord of the present possessors, whose lives and fortunes were at his devotion, and who were still ready to obey his royal mandate, if this should be deemed necessary to the interests of the throne.

RAYMOND proceeded to execute his commission^r, and was received by Henry with the severe dignity of an offended monarch, not displeased with his representations, but not yet disposed to give him an explicit, much less a favourable, answer. From day to day Raymond attended on the court, while the affairs of his associates became every day more distressful and alarming. In this juncture of expectation and anxiety, intelligence is received of the death of Becket. The king is thrown into the utmost consternation, and has neither leisure nor inclination to attend to the less interesting affairs of Ireland. Here the adventurers, left to their difficulties and apprehensions, are alarmed by another incident particularly inconvenient in their present situation, the death of their ally Dermot^o. The Irish annalists, by their account of this event, plainly shew their detestation of the man, who, as they express it, first shook the foundations of his country. They represent his death as the miraculous effect of divine wrath, poured upon his guilty head, at the intercession of every Irish saint. His disease, they say, was strange and tremendous, and rendered him an odious and offensive spectacle of misery; that he was deserted in his extremity by every friend, and expired without any spiritual comforts in a state of horrid impenitence.

THE death of the prince of Leinster was immediately succeeded by an almost total defection of the Irish from earl Strongbow and his associates^a. Donald Kevanagh, and one or two other petty chiefs, were the only natives who still adhered to them, or on whose services they could rely in this state of their distress, when they were abandoned by their king, deprived of all supplies, and threatened by the storm now collecting round them.

AND scarcely had they time to concert any measures of defence^a, when Hesculph, who had lately escaped from Dublin, once more appeared at their gates at the head of a considerable force, consisting of troops collected in the northern islands, armed in the Danish manner, and in numbers superiour to the garrison. The Dane had landed his men without opposition, and bent the force of his assault against the eastern quarter of the city with the spirit of a man determined to retrieve his own honour, and to regain the seat of his countrymen and ancestors. Strongbow had been called away to Waterford. Milo de Cogan, who commanded in his absence, supported the attack with becoming bravery, and maintained a violent and bloody contest at the Eastern gate, till the numbers and obstinate valour of the besiegers threatened to bear down all opposition. In the very moment, when he was on the point of yielding, his brother Richard issued from the southern quarter with a select party, arrived at the field of battle, and charged the enemy in the rear, who, in the first violent surprize of inexperienced troops, imagined that the garrison had received some powerful reinforcement. The terrour and confusion encreased every

every moment, while their assailants on the other hand redoubled their efforts, till the disorder of the besiegers at length ended in a precipitate flight. The conquerors were now joined by a neighbouring Irish chieftain, whose assistance in the engagement they could not venture to accept; and the routed enemy were pursued to the sea, with considerable slaughter. Hesculph their general was taken prisoner, and led in triumph to Dublin, where his pride and violence were insulted by the joy expressed at this victory. He insolently advised the conquerors to reserve their triumph for the final issue of a war now but commenced. A new and formidable armament was prepared; and he hoped ere long to meet them once more in the field, with a force more than sufficient to crush those, who found it so difficult to sustain his present assault. This insolence and vanity were made the pretence for destroying a dangerous and incensed enemy, without the appearance of premeditated cruelty. Milo declared that the man, who thus presumed in his captivity to menace and insult his conquerors, should at least find his own purposes of revenge effectually prevented; and ordered the Dane to immediate execution.

THE Britons, however, were soon convinced that their captive had but too good reasons for his arrogant menaces^r. The period which Henry had assigned for their return was now elapsed: Raymond had been obliged to depart without an explicit answer, and found earl Strongbow returned to Dublin in the utmost dejection, cut off from all supplies, and already considerably streightened to maintain his army. The Irish chieftains were no

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strangers

strangers to his distress. Lawrence, archbishop of Dublin, whose sanctity of character gave weight to his representations, flew from province to province, to every inferior district, and every chieftain, entreating, exhorting, and commanding them to seize the present opportunity, to take arms against a common enemy, and to exterminate the dangerous foreigners, now worn out by their distresses, and ready to sink forever under the first vigorous assault. Not contented with raising a spirit of indignation and valour in his countrymen, the politic and indefatigable prelate, in conjunction with Roderic, dispatched emissaries to Gotherd king of the island of Mann, as well as to other princes of the Northern isles, who made the most affecting representations of the cruelty and ambition of the Britons, whom no bounds could restrain; entreating their assistance against an enemy who would not confine their injurious attempts to Ireland, but extend their usurpations, and at last fall with their whole weight on those, who now seemed most remote from danger.

In this application for foreign assistance, Lawrence, like a wise statesman, addressed himself to those who had been taught by frequent experience to dread the progress of roving adventurers, who were brave and hardy, but by no means so powerful and numerous as ever to over-run the country to which they were invited. Their fears were so far alarmed, and their hopes so flattered by the promises of Roderic, that these islanders consented to assist their neighbours, and soon blocked up the harbour of Dublin with thirty ships, while the confederated Irish took their several stations at the same time, so

as to surround the city". Roderic with his provincial troops encamped westward at Castlenock. O'Ruarc and O'Carrol placed themselves north of the harbour, near Clontarf*: the lord of O'Kenselagh possessed the opposite side ; while the prince of Thomond, who had deserted his Leinster allies, and again united with Roderic, advanced to Kilmainham, within less than a mile from the walls. Even Lawrence himself now appeared in arms, and commanded his particular troop, an instance of martial spirit not unusual to the prelates of those Days, but not always exerted in a cause so honourable as the present. Their numbers, which are variously related, and highly exaggerated, were certainly great and formidable ; but instead of forming one body, actuated by one spirit, and directed by one absolute commander, they were divided into separate and independent armies, commanded by distinct leaders, neither united among themselves, nor implicitly obedient to their monarch ; distracted by mutual jealousies and rivalries, and each indifferent at least, to the interest and honour of his associates. When the sudden flame of zeal had once subsided, they expected that this handful of foreigners would submit, without waiting for the assault ; and for two whole months contented themselves with investing the city, and depriving the besieged of all possibility of supplies.

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* Regan. Girald. Camb.

* The lord so called was probably the same, who had been vested by Roderic with the government of Leinster on the first expulsion of Dermot ; or the chief who had been elected successor by the Irish, on the death of this prince, in defiance of the pretensions of Strongbow, who claimed the sovereignty of this province by virtue of the appointment of his father-in-law.

THIS inactive conduct, however was sufficient to reduce earl Strongbow to the utmost difficulties^c. Every day he became more and more distressed for provisions, and his men of consequence grew weak and distempered. At the first alarm of danger he had sent for succours to Fitz-Stephen, who readily supplied him with a small reinforcement; when the men of Wexford, seizing the advantage of Robert's weakness, and encouraged by the accounts received of the distresses of his countrymen, rose suddenly in arms, and besieged him in the fort of Carrig. And now Donald Kevanagh arrived at Dublin, and passing with the utmost difficulty through the quarters of the besiegers, brought the alarming intelligence of the present danger of Fitz-Stephen, declaring, that if not effectually supported within three days, the gallant Briton must fall into the hands of his implacable enemies; that his wife, the sister of Fitz-Gerald and all her children were involved in his distress, and implored relief from that merciless and brutal violence which threatened them.

OPPRESSED with these accumulated misfortunes, earl Strongbow summoned a council of war to deliberate on the measures necessary to be taken in this desperate emergency. It was readily determined, as the most obvious expedient, to enter into treaty with Roderic upon any terms not totally servile and oppressive^a. The prelate of Dublin it was supposed would willingly undertake the office of mediator, so suitable to his character; and to him they addressed themselves. With the fairest expressions of his readiness and solicitude to prevent the effusion of Christian Blood, he came to receive

receive their overtures. Strongbow proposed to acknowledge Roderic as his sovereign, and to hold the province of Leinster from the Irish monarch, provided he would raise the siege, and accept him as his vassal. Lawrence engaged to bear this proposal to Roderic, and soon returned with an answer, probably framed by himself. He entered the council with the composure of secret triumph and exultation, and with a firm tone and aspect declared, that the only terms which his monarch was disposed to grant were these: that Dublin, Waterford, and Wexford, with all the forts possessed by the Britons, should be immediately surrendered into his hands; and that the earl and his associates should with all their forces depart from Ireland by a day assigned, leaving every part of the island free from their usurpations, and absolutely renouncing all their pretended claims. On these conditions they were to be spared, but the least reluctance or delay would determine the besiegers to storm the city.

As the Britons were now supposed to be absolutely in the power of the besiegers, these terms were neither severe nor insolent; but on the contrary appear, when impartially considered, to do honour to the spirit of the prelate, as well as to the judgment of the minister. Notwithstanding all the rigours and cruelties of their success, no revenge was attempted. To prevent the effects of their despair, they were assured of safety; they were allowed to depart unmolested, and were only to resign, what they were supposed to have usurped and injuriously detained. But they were terms insupportably mortifying to indigent and aspiring adventurers; and their leaders, now left to consider these disagreeable terms, looked upon each other

with

with silent shame and consternation^r, till Milo de Cogan, starting suddenly from his dismay, declared his resolution to die bravely, rather than submit to the mercy of barbarous enemies. The spirit of desperate valour was soon caught by his associates. Fitz-Gerald, Raymond, and the other leaders, all with one voice concurred in the generous purpose, of resting their whole fortune on the event of one brave effort, which, at the worst, would end in an honourable death, more eligible than to perish with famine, or to resign themselves to those, whose perfidy they had too good reason to suspect. The resolution once formed, they proceeded with greater calmness to concert the necessary operations. It was determined that their impression should be made on that quarter where Roderick lay encamped. They reinforced themselves by a considerable body of the townsmen, whom they persuaded to take part in this desperate enterprize, by possessing them with dreadful apprehensions of the cruelty of their besiegers; and now marched out in good order, and with determined spirits, against an enemy, who expected nothing less than such a bold attack. Raymond led the advanced guard, Milo commanded the second division, and was followed by the earl and Fitz-Gerald with the most considerable part of their force. They found this quarter of their besiegers without discipline or order, secure and careless, and scarcely with any military appearance: and their assault was furious. They quickly bore down the first feeble resistance, forced their way with terrible slaughter through the confused crowds, and filled the whole camp with consternation. The Irish fled from the danger, which their surprize had magnified, with the most precipitate

pitate dismay; and their monarch himself, who in perfect ease and confidence had retired to his bath, escaped only by starting from his retirement half naked, and joining the general rout. The chieftains of the other stations, not timely apprized of this attack, or, what is more probable, not zealously disposed to support their monarch, heard the confusion, caught the panic, and, while the victors continued their pursuit, broke up their camps precipitately. Thus the Britons, who in the morning were on the point of total desperation, saw, in one day, their numerous enemies flying on all sides, and leaving the plunder of their camps to a small enfeebled garrison, who thus, besides other advantages, gained provisions sufficient to support them for a year*.

DUBLIN being thus freed, Strongbow committed the government of it to Milo de Cogan, resolving to proceed immediately to Wexford, in order to relieve Fitz-Stephen^r. But unhappily he was by this time in the hands of his enemies. He had defended

* The Irish annalists pass over this whole transaction in silence, or at most touch slightly upon a victory gained by Milo de Cogan over O'Ruarc and his associates. And they, who rely most on their authority, deny the truth of the circumstantial relation of Cambrensis, together with the detail found in the translation of the Lambeth manuscript, ascribed to Maurice Regan, or at least contend that this siege was formed not by Roderic but O'Ruarc. Had these annalists furnished any accounts contradictory to those extant, and usually admitted as authentic, they would have deserved an impartial attention. But their silence is of no weight against the authority of a cotemporary writer. And, if we should allow him to have mistaken the name of the Irish general who was surprized and defeated, the point will probably be deemed of very little consequence by all those who are not, from national partialities, or other circumstances, interested in the reputation of Roderic O'Connor. And it is to be observed, that we have in Giraldus an account of another attempt made on Dublin by O'Ruarc, in which he was defeated by Cogan, immediately before the landing of Henry the Second.

^r Girald. Camb.

defended himself at Carrig with the utmost bravery, and repeatedly foiled his besiegers in their boldest attempts ; when at length, we are told by Giraldus, they had recourse to a stratagem, if we may call the most horrid perjury by that name, which proved successful. A parley was desired, and a company of Wexfordians admitted to confer with Robert. With an appearance of the utmost friendship they assured him, that earl Strongbow had at length suffered the punishment of his temerity ; that Roderic had marched his powers to Dublin, stormed the city, and put all the Britons to the sword ; that the monarch was now upon his march to Wexford, impatient to extirpate every remains of the British adventurers, and particularly breathing revenge against Fitz-Stephen, who first pointed his countrymen the way into Ireland. Affected as they were to him more favourably than to any of his associates, they determined that he should not be the only person ignorant of the fate of his unhappy countrymen, and his own impending danger. To assist him was impossible ; but to favour his escape was an office, which his kindness had justly merited. They urgently pressed him to commit himself to their protection, solemnly promising to convey him and his garrison into Wales, before the arrival of Roderic should frustrate their amicable intentions.

ROBERT doubted and hesitated : to remove his suspicions they produced two reverend bishops in their robes of ceremony, bearing the cross, the host, and some reliques, and, laying their hands on these, swore a solemn oath in confirmation of all they had asserted. Fitz-Stephen, effectually deceived by this solemnity, resigned himself and his followers

followers to the mercy of their mortal enemies, who, instead of conducting him to the sea, cast him into chains, disarmed his men, and practised every wanton cruelty upon them, that insolence and barbarity could devise; maiming, tormenting, and killing them. In the midst of this horrid triumph, intelligence is received, that the victorious Britons are on their march to rescue their companions, and must soon arrive. They set fire to the town of Wexford, and, retiring with Fitz-Stephen, and those other prisoners who yet survived their cruelty, take their post in an island in the middle of the harbour, called the Holy Island.

STRONGBOW in the mean time proceeded on his march, but not without an opposition more vigorous than any he had yet encountered. He was to pass through a defile in a country then called Hidrone, situated in the present county of Carlow*. And here O'Rian, lord of this district, waited in ambush to receive him with a considerable force. No sooner were the British troops hemmed in on all sides by woods, precipices, and morasses, than they found themselves suddenly and unexpectedly attacked. The surprize, the violence of the onset, the hideous ululations of the Irish, and the inconvenience of the situation, soon threw them into considerable disorder, and obliged the leaders to exert their utmost efforts to prevent a total overthrow. Meiler Fitz-Henry, one of their bravest commanders, in attempting to bring up his men, was stricken to the ground, and with difficulty rescued; and the Irish, animated by the success of their first impression, were on the point of gaining a decisive victory, when a monk, called Nicholas, who served

* Girald. Camb. Regan.

ved in the British army, discharged an arrow so successfully against their leader O'Rian, that he fell down dead; and his men, confounded at his death, fled, and left their enemies masters of the field. Giraldus assures us that the earl regained the plain in safety, with the loss of *only one young man**.

THE earl proceeded to Wexford, saw the desolation of the city, and heard of the captivity of Fitz-Stephen. To distress and mortify him still further, the Irish, who had retired to the Holy Island^A, sent a deputation to assure him, that the least attempt to molest them in their present situation should instantly determine them to strike off the heads of all their prisoners. He knew the violence of these men; turned aside, and marched to Waterford. Here the mutual animosities of some petty chiefs threatened to involve him in new contests. On the return of his good fortune, O'Brien, prince of Thomond, affected a strict attachment to his kinsman,

* In this expression of Giraldus, a reader, fond of refining, might possibly discover an allusion to a well-known Irish tradition. It is said, that the son of Strongbow, a youth of seventeen years, was so terrified at the first onset of the Irish army, that he fled to Dublin in the utmost consternation, declaring that his father and all his forces had perished: that, when convinced of his mistake, he appeared before the earl, and congratulated him upon his victory, the father rigidly condemned him to death for cowardice, and suffered the sentence to be executed; or, as it is more horribly related, executed it with his own hand, by cutting his son in two. This tradition receives some countenance from the ancient monument in the cathedral of Dublin, in which the statue of the son of Strongbow is continued only to the middle, with the bowels open, and supported by the hands. But, as this monument was erected some centuries after the death of Strongbow, it is of the less authority. The Irish annalists repeatedly mention the *earl's son* as engaged in several actions posterior to this period. There is therefore the utmost reason to suspect, that the whole narrative hath no other foundation than the fiction of some Irish bard or romancer, who invented for a people delighting in the marvellous and affecting.

A Girald. Camb.

man^s. He had conceived some resentment against the lord of Ossory; and, as the surest means of gratifying his revenge, represented him to Strongbow as a pestilent and implacable adversary to his power and authority, whom his interest and honour equally obliged him to reduce: for which purpose he made a tender of his own assistance, that the common enemy of their house might at length meet the punishment due to his repeated treasons. So artful were his representations, that Strongbow agreed to march against this lord; and, having increased his present force to two thousand men by the junction of O'Brien's troops, proceeded on his expedition. The Ossorian, who had already experienced the formidable valour of the Britons, determined to avert the danger by a timely submission. He represented to earl Strongbow, by his deputies, that however traduced by the malice of O'Brien, he had continued ever since his treaty with king Dermot, and was still disposed to continue, in dutiful allegiance to the throne of Leinster; that he desired but a safe-conduct; was ready to appear before the earl, and to convince him both of his own rectitude, and the falsehood of his enemy. The proposal was accepted: the British lords, and the prince of Thomond, engaged in the most solemn manner, that he should come and depart in security: and Prendergast, his old ally, who had returned with Strongbow, was now appointed to conduct him to the camp. Here he pleaded his cause boldly against his virulent accusers, who clamourously insisted on his guilt, and were preparing to put him to death, when the generous Prendergast, notwithstanding the injuries he had once received from the Ossorian, drew his sword,

sword, and with an oath declared that no violence should be offered to the man, who had entrusted himself to their good faith; that he had conducted him to their presence, and would conduct him back again. The earl assented; the chieftain was conveyed into his own territory; O'Brien retired in the spleen of disappointment, and Strongbow proceeded to Ferns, where for some days he exercised a royal authority, rewarding his friends, and punishing the disaffected. The chieftain of the O'Birnes, who had originally sacrificed his personal connections with Dermot to the public cause, and had ever since uniformly opposed the interest of the foreigners, could no longer escape the officious malice of his enemies. He was brought in a prisoner and condemned to death. The like sentence is said to have been executed on a son of Donald Kevanagh, notwithstanding the services of the father, who still continued his adherence to the Britons, and was rewarded by Strongbow with the grant of a considerable district, called by the historian the Plains of Leinster.

BUT this new sovereign of Leinster was soon called off to more important objects. Henry king of England had recovered from his consternation at the death of Becket; his vigilance and policy had proved too powerful for the machinations of his enemies; and, notwithstanding their practices at Rome to drive the pope to the severest exertions of his spiritual jurisdiction, against the supposed murderer of the prelate, he contrived to avert, at least to suspend, the danger of papal indignation, and resolved no longer to defer his long-projected expedition into Ireland, whose success might restore that lustre to his character, which had been

impaired

impaired by his transactions with the hierarchy. He was now in England, making the necessary provisions for this expedition; and, as his jealousy of the adventurers was increased by their success, and as the time was come when he could himself undertake the reduction of Ireland, he utterly disavowed their proceedings, expressed the utmost resentment at their presumption and disobedience, and by a second message summoned earl Richard to appear instantly before him. The earl determined to obey this mandate, and, stationing his governors in Dublin and Waterford, and making such other dispositions as the time permitted, embarked, and met the king at Newnham near Gloucester. Whatever resentment Henry affected was soon allayed by the submissions of the earl, who repeated his professions of allegiance, and yielded all his Irish acquisitions to the disposal of his loyal master: the king suffered himself to be entreated by Hervey of Mountmorres, who had summoned the earl to his presence, and now attended with his nephew. The scene of dissimulation was closed by a treaty, in which it was agreed, that the city of Dublin and a large adjoining domain, together with all the maritime towns and forts, acquired by Strongbow, should be surrendered absolutely to Henry, who on his part graciously consented, that the earl should have all his other Irish possessions granted in perpetuity and to be held of the king and his heirs. Strongbow thus restored to favour, attended his royal master in his progress by the Severn side and Western coast of Wales to Pembroke, where the king resided while his forces were assembling at Milford.

HERE

HERE again Henry assumed all the terrors of offended majesty^a against the Welshmen who had abetted the presumption of their countrymen, and assisted them in their unwarranted invasion of Ireland, as if they were sovereign and independent, and had a right to engage in foreign quarrels, not only without his permission, but contrary to his express command. Such flagrant contempt of his authority, and disaffection to his government, it seems, were not to be pardoned, until he had seized every castle of every lord within their province, and filled them with his own forces.

AND now while Strongbow attended on the king^b, and Raymond Le Gros was engaged at Waterford, a vigorous effort was made by O'Ruarc of Breffney against the garrison of Dublin^c. The spirit of his attempt proved that the forces of one Irish chieftain, united and obedient, were really more formidable than much more considerable numbers, collected from different provinces, without mutual harmony or subordination. Milo de Cogan could not repel his attack without considerable loss; but the first impression proving unsuccessful, the Irish, as usual, considered the battle as desperate; and the defeat of O'Ruarc was embittered by the loss of his son, who fell upon the field of action.

SUCH successes, however inconsiderable, served to confirm the natives in the terrible ideas they had formed of British valour, and contributed to that helpless suspense with which the fame of Henry's intended expedition was received. A powerful and renowned prince, who claimed a right

of

^a Girald. Camb.

^b Ibid.

^c Regan.

of Sovereignty over the whole island, and affected the utmost resentment at those British leaders who had borne arms in Ireland, as if they had invaded his dominions, and made war upon his subjects, was now ready to appear in person, and assert his pretended rights at the head of a considerable force. Yet, neither the fame of his intended expedition, nor the actual march of his troops, nor the king's gradual progress through Wales, appear to have produced any ferment or extraordinary motions, in Ireland, any measures of defence, any consultations for repelling the common danger, any exertions on the part of Roderic, or any associations among the subordinate chieftains. Each seems to have confined his attention to his own interests, and the interest of his tribe, with a sordid purpose of deriving what advantages he might from the invasion, at least of averting the evils that might attend it, from himself. They saw the power of their own monarch on the point of total dissolution; and they saw it with indifference, if not with an envious and malignant satisfaction. Some were even ready to prevent their invader, and to submit before he yet appeared upon their coast. The men of Wexford, who had possessed themselves of Fitz-Stephen, resolved to avert the consequences of their late perfidy and cruelty by the forwardness of their zeal for the service of the king of England, and the readiness of their submissions. Their deputies were sent to Pembroke^r, who in the name of their fellow-citizens cast themselves at Henry's feet, and with the most passionate expressions of obedience humbly entreated that he would accept them as his faithful vassals, ready to resign themselves, their lands, and possessions

sessions to his absolute disposal. " They had al-
 " ready endeavoured to approve their zeal by seiz-
 " ing Robert Fitz-Stephen, a traitor to his sove-
 " reign, who had lately entered their territory by
 " force of arms, without any due warrant or fair
 " pretence ; had slaughtered their people, seized
 " their lands, and attempted to establish himself
 " independent of his liege-lord. They kept him
 " in chains, and were ready to deliver him to the
 " disposal of his sovereign." The king received
 them with expressions of the utmost grace and fa-
 vour ; commended their zeal in repressing the un-
 warrantable attempts of Fitz-Stephen ; declared
 that he should soon enquire into his crimes, and
 the wrongs they had sustained, and inflict condign
 punishment upon every offence committed by his
 undutiful subjects. Thus were the Irishmen dis-
 missed in the utmost joy and exultation ; and the
 artifice of Henry, while it inspired these men with
 favourable dispositions to his interests, proved also
 the most effectual means of saving Fitz-Stephen
 from their capricious cruelty.



soldiers. His fleet, consisting of two hundred and forty ships^a, an awful and formidable object to those on whose coast they appeared, entered the port of Waterford, and his forces were landed on the feast of St. Luke, in October of the year eleven hundred and seventy-two. The professed design of his expedition was not to conquer, but to take possession of a country granted to him by the pope, and to exercise a sovereignty which he affected to believe must be acknowledged and obeyed without the least difficulty or reluctance*.

AMIDST the acclamations of joy at the arrival of this new sovereign^c, earl Strongbow made a formal surrender of Waterford, and did homage to Henry for the principality of Leinster. The men of Wexford were at hand with their prisoner Fitz-Stephen, whom they presented to the king, repeating their accusations, and imploring justice against their tyrant and oppressor. Henry received them with an affected commiseration of their wrongs, too gross to impose on any but the rude and inexperienced; assured them of his protection, and

^a Ann. Ult. MS.

* This was the idea which the Irish subjects of later times entertained. There was a tradition in the reign of Edward the Second, which though not unexceptionably established, yet shews what were their conceptions at that period. It was said, that while Henry's fleet was yet at sea, an Ostman lord of Waterford, who supposed that the descent must be made upon his lands, and was solicitous to secure his property from depredation, drew some chains across the harbour, in order to divert the fleet to some other quarter; that as the obstacle was soon overcome, Henry immediately on his landing seized this lord and his accomplices, whose crime was that they had presumed to treat him as an invader, not as the rightful sovereign of Ireland; that he therefore dealt with them not as enemies who had acted in a fair course of open war, but as rebellious subjects; that they were tried in what he called the king's court, the act of rebellion proved, and sentence of high-treason executed upon them. Placit. Coronæ, 4 Edv. II. in Turr. Bermingh.

^c Girald. Camb.

and sternly reproaching Fitz-Stephen for his presumption, remanded him to prison. The Irish were rejoiced to find that they had not only escaped the punishment due to their perfidy and cruelty, but that they had involved their enemy in danger and disgrace ; and Fitz-Stephen was the less mortified, as he well knew the purchase of his liberty, and that he must of necessity resign all his Irish acquisitions to the king.

THE fame of his intended expedition had for some time been spread through Ireland, and its influence upon the several toparchs was soon discovered^r. Dermot Mac-Arthy, prince of Desmond, was the first chieftain who submitted and acknowledged the sovereignty of Henry. On the very day after his arrival this Irish prince attended at his court, resigned his city of Corke to the king, did him homage, and stipulated to pay a tribute for the rest of his territory, which on these conditions he was to enjoy without further molestation or restraint. An English governour and garrison were immediately appointed to take possession of his capital, while the king displayed his power and magnificence by marching to Lismore, where he chose a situation, and gave the necessary orders and direction for building a fort^s. From thence proceeding to Cashel, we are told he had an interview with the archbishop of this see ; and possibly might have deemed it useful to possess this prelate, the first of the Irish clergy who appeared before him, with an opinion of his gracious intentions to his country, and his zeal for the regulation of its church. Nor were these short excursions without their influence, in striking the inhabitants with an

awful and terrible impresson of his power. A formidable army hovering about the districts of each petty chieftain, when each was left to his own resources for defence, quickened their resolves, and conquered every remains of pride, or reluctance in submitting to the invader. O'Brien of Thomond thought it dangerous to delay, and meeting Henry on the banks of the Sure, surrendered his city of Limerick, and did homage for his other territory, engaging to pay him tribute^d. Donchad of Offory, dreading the advantages which his rival might acquire by his forward zeal, hastened to the king, and submitted to become his tributary and vassal. O'Faolan of the Decies followed these examples, and all the inferior chiefs of Munster vied with each other in the alacrity of their submissions. All were received with gracious assurances of favour and protection, entertained with magnificence, loaded with presents, and dismissed with deep impressions of the grandeur and condescensions of this powerful monarch.

He returned to Wexford^r; and here, as it was no longer necessary to keep up the appearance of resentment to Fitz-Stephen, his barons were permitted to intercede for a brave subject, who had not willingly or intentionally offended, for whose future fidelity they were all ready to become sureties, and who was himself prepared to give the best surety for his allegiance, by a formal resignation of all his Irish possessions to his sovereign. Fitz-Stephen was set at liberty, and surrendered Wexford and its territory to the king, doing homage for the rest of his acquisitions, which he was allowed to retain from Henry and his heirs.

AND now, having provided for the security of Munster, and stationed his garrisons in the cities of Limerick, Cork, Waterford^b, Henry determined to proceed to Dublin, to take possession of this city in due form, which had been surrendered by earl Richard. He led his troops through Offory, in a slow and stately progress, so as to strike the rude inhabitants with the splendour and magnificence of his royal army, and give their chieftains an opportunity of repairing to his camp, and acknowledging his sovereignty. Their indifference to the interests of Roderic, as well as their terror of the English arms, soon determined them to make their peace with Henry. The Irish lords of Leinster deemed his service more honourable than a subjection to Strongbow, whose severity had rendered him an object of horror to the Irish, even from his first landing^r. As he advanced towards Dublin, the neighbouring lords all appeared and submitted; O'Carrol of Argial, a chieftain of still greater power and consequence, repaired to his camp, and in due form engaged to become his tributary: and to complete the mortification of Roderic, his old and intimate associate O'Ruarc of Breffney, whose interests he had supported, whose personal injuries he had revenged, whom he had made lord of a considerable part of Meath, so that Giraldus calls him king of Meath, abandoned his falling friend and ally, and became the willing vassal of this new sovereign.

RODERIC, though confounded at the defection of his tributaries, and the formidable progress of his invader, harrassed by the factions of this province^r, and afflicted by the dissensions of his family,

^b Ibid.^r Ann. MSS.^r Ann. var. MSS.

family, yet could not at once resign his title to the monarchy of Ireland^c. And though sensible of the danger of encountering an English army, and little enabled by such numbers as he could collect to march out against the royal invader, he yet collected his provincial troops, and, entrenching himself upon the banks of the Shannon, seemed determined that his own territory at least should not be sacrificed to the ambition of Henry. Unencumbered by a crowd of faithless, discontented, and disobedient followers, he now appears to act with a spirit and dignity more suited to his station. Hugh de Lacy and William Fitz-Andelm, were commissioned to meet this refractory prince, and either to persuade, or force him to a submission*. But Roderic was too strong, and too well posted to be assailed by a detachment from the English army; and he at least affected to believe that his fortune was not yet so totally desperate as to warrant an immediate resignation of his dignity and authority, while his own territory remained inviolate, and the brave and powerful chiefs of Ulster still kept retired in their own districts without any thought of submission.

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^c Benedict Abb. vol. I.

* Giraldus indeed asserts that Roderic yielded to the instances of De Lacy and Fitz-Andelm, swore allegiance to Henry, and gave hostages as a security for the faithful payment of his tribute. But the Irish annalists acknowledge no such submission; and the abbot of Peterborough declares ingenuously that the king of Connaught still continued to maintain his independence, agreeing in this with the artless historical strictures of Ireland, which distinctly mark the extent of Henry's present acquisitions, without the least appearance of disguise or partiality, and represent their monarch as still exercising an independent sovereignty, opposing the invaders, and at length treating with Henry at the time and in the manner stated on record; as the reader will find in the ensuing chapter.

THE Irish chieftains^o, who accepted Henry as their sovereign, and attended at his court, were received with all those conciliating expressions of favour, the common artifice of ambition, but which were peculiarly flattering to a people equally proud and inexperienced. It was the feast of Christmas, a season of general festivity, for which Henry prepared with such elegance and pomp as his present situation might permit, and such as were perfectly stupendous to his Irish followers. They flocked to Dublin from all quarters, in the eagerness of surprize and expectation. As the city afforded no building capable of receiving the royal train, and the numerous assembly of guests, a temporary structure was raised with hurdles, after the Irish fashion, in the south-eastern suburbs, of large dimensions and richly ornamented; and here the vassal-lords of Ireland were admitted freely, and feasted sumptuously. Piles of silver, costly meats, generous wines, dress, music, and attendants, all conspired to possess them with a vulgar admiration of their invader. Dazzled by his grandeur, and intoxicated by his condescensions, they forgot the baseness of their submission, and fancied themselves exalted to a degree of consequence by being allied to such magnificence and splendour.

IF we are to believe the English historians, the clergy of Ireland were still readier, and more abject in their submissions to king Henry than the lords and toparchs. The abbot of Peterborough asserts, and is followed by Hoveden and others, that immediately on the king's arrival at Waterford, the whole body of the hierarchy attended him, received him

him as sovereign lord of Ireland, and swore fealty to him and his heirs; and that from each prelate he received a charter or instrument of their respective submissions, which the king took care to transmit to Rome. Giraldus, who was studious to display every particular which might do honour to his royal master, takes not the least notice of a transaction so extraordinary, and the Irish annalists are equally silent on that head.

BUT it is asserted with more probability, and on better authority, that Henry, having been acknowledged sovereign by a considerable part of the island, unmolested by those who had not yet submitted, and prevented by the severity of the season from any attempt to reduce them by force, affected to display his zeal and solicitude to fulfil the conditions of his grant from pope Adrian, by turning his attention to the church of Ireland, and labouring for the reformation of its supposed abuses^s. A synod of the clergy was summoned in his name, and assembled at Cashel by his order, to enquire into the present state of morals and religion: But whether this was a general assembly of all the Irish prelates, may be fairly doubted. Gelasius, the primate of Armagh, a man highly revered by his countrymen, and who derived considerable influence from the sanctity of his character, certainly did not attend, and as an apology is said to have pleaded his age and infirmities; though these did not prevent him from holding another synod, convened soon after, in Connaught, by the authority of Roderic^t, and probably in opposition to that

^s Girald Camb.

^t Ann. Anon. MSS.

that now summoned by Henry*. The prelates of Ulster followed the example of their metropolitan. And if the prelate of Tuam, or Lawrence of Dublin, who had so zealously contended against the English, obeyed this summons, they might have deemed their presence necessary to preserve the honour of their church, to them a point of moment, from injurious representation; and by a readiness to correct what might really be found amiss, to deprive the invader of the great pretence for extending his hostilities.

CHRISTIAN, bishop of Lismore, presided in this assembly as the pope's legate^x; in which character he had, about twenty years before, presided in the grand assembly of kings, prelates, and nobility, convened by order of cardinal Paparon. The abbot of Buldwais, the archdeacon of Landaff, and some others of the English clergy attended on the part of Henry, to forward the purposes of their master, and to observe the conduct of the Irish prelates. The professed design of this synod was, in obedience to the sovereign pontiff, to devise remedies for ignorance and wickedness, to eradicate every fibre of depravity and iniquity, and to restore the purity of their ecclesiastical constitution, now contaminated

* Giraldus asserts that Gelasius some time after came to Dublin, and gave his full assent to the transactions and ordinances of this synod. The Irish annalists on the contrary declare that he was constantly employed in regulating the ecclesiastical affairs in the Western and Northern parts of the island until his death, which happened in eleven hundred and seventy-four. While the writers of each nation are solicitous to claim this venerable prelate to their own party, they agree in one particular, which suited their understandings, and is therefore carefully recorded—that Gelasius, in every progress through the kingdom was constantly attended by a white cow, a particular favourite, which supplied him with milk, the chief sustenance of the pious and abstemious primate.

contaminated and disgraced. And the ordinances which were to answer such important purposes we find forbidding marriages within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity; directing that baptism should be publicly administered, youth instructed, tythes regularly paid, the lands of the clergy exempted from secular exactions; that all true sons of the church should have power by will to distribute their effects in due proportion between their wives and children, and be decently interred in hallowed ground. Such was the plan of reformation which required the interposition of the pope, which obliged him to transfer the sovereignty of Ireland to a foreign prince, and demanded the presence of the English monarch and a royal army to enforce! as if the same futile ordinances had not been repeatedly enacted in every synod, held almost annually by the Irish clergy, from that of Paparon to this of king Henry*. The whole ridiculous scene was closed by a declaration highly flattering to the king, and expressed in terms of the most abject servility†. It directs that the divine service in the church of Ireland shall for the future be in all things conformable to that of the church of England. “For it is meet and very just,” say these reverend flatterers, “that as Ireland hath by
 “ Providence received a lord and king from Eng-
 “ land, so she may receive from the same a better
 “ form of living. For to his royal grandeur are
 “ both the church and realm of Ireland indebted
 “ for whatever they have hitherto obtained, either
 “ of the benefits of peace, or the encrease of
 “ religion. Since, before his coming into Ireland,
 “ evils of various kinds had from old times gra-
 “ dually overspread the nation, which by his
 “ power

* Ann. 4, Mag. MSS.

† Girald. Camb.

"power and goodness are now abolished."—— Happy had it been for the peace and welfare of ages, had Henry by a few months residence in Ireland been really able to produce such blessed effects ! But the adulation of these ecclesiastics is a subject too contemptible to dwell upon.

THERE are other acts of government which Henry exercised in Ireland that deserve more particular attention. Matthew Paris writes", that he convened a council at Lismore, in which the laws of England were by all gratefully accepted and established by the sanction of a solemn oath. Whether the historian hath mistaken the place of assembling, and instead of a synod held under the bishop of Lismore, hath supposed another assembly in the town so named, seems of little moment. But the real nature of this grant and general acceptance of the laws of England deserves to be considered. And to this we shall be naturally led by a few reflections on what hath been already related, as well as to the true purport of some subsequent transactions.

WE have seen the princes and petty chieftains of Ireland submitting to king Henry with a readiness the less surprising, when we consider that to them it was not unusual to be visited by a superiour potentate, who demanded a recognition of his sovereignty, obliged them to become his tributaries, and to give hostages for their fidelity, and even sometimes to resign a portion of their territory. So that Henry demanded no more than they had frequently granted to others with great readiness, and generally with little sincerity, scarcely

scarcely considering the concession as dishonourable, much less an essential diminution of their local power and authority. Nor is there any authentic evidence to prove, with whatever confidence it may have been asserted, that “the Irish made no terms for their own form of government, but wholly abolishing their own, they consented to receive the English laws, and submitted entirely to the English government.” It is scarcely conceivable that a whole people should at once be either forced or persuaded into so extraordinary a revolution; unless they, of all the human race, rude and barbarous as they are represented, were alone exempt from strong partialities in favour of their laws and customs. Nor is it probable that a politic and sagacious prince should form a scheme in his present situation, so extravagant, because of all others the most dangerous to attempt, and the most difficult to effect, that of obtruding in a moment an entire new system of laws and polity upon a number of communities, none of which he had subdued. But that no such design was either attempted or effected will appear, not only from the manifold proofs which must necessarily be produced in the progress of this history, but from the transactions already related. We have observed that by an ordinance of the synod of Cashel it was provided, that the clergy should for the future be free from all secular exactions. Here it is necessary to produce this ordinance at large.

“ALL the ecclesiastical lands and possessions shall be entirely free from every exaction of secular men. And especially no petty kings or lords,

• Vid. Carey's Answ. to Molyneux, p. 22.

“ lords, or any potentates of Ireland, nor their
“ children or families, shall for the future exact
“ maintenance or entertainment, according to
“ custom, in the ecclesiastical territories, or pre-
“ sume to extort them by violence. And that
“ detestable entertainment, which is four times a
“ year required by neighbouring lords, shall not
“ for the future be demanded from the ecclesiasti-
“ cal towns.—And moreover, in all cases of
“ homicide committed by the laity, as often as
“ they shall compound for the same with their
“ adversaries, the clergy who are their relations
“ shall pay nothing on this account; but as they
“ had no part in the perpetration of the homicide,
“ so shall they be free from contributing to the
“ fine.”

IT cannot be supposed that the execution of the Irish laws should be thus regulated, if these laws were entirely abolished. If the clergy were to be exempt from Coyne, Coshering, and other like exactions, it is evident that the petty kings and lords were still to demand them from others. If the clergy were not to contribute to the Eric in cases of murder, it follows that this compensation was still to be paid by the laity; and of consequence that the old Irish polity was not only to subsist, but warranted, secured, and regulated, in an assembly convened by the authority of Henry. Here then, were there no other, we have a direct proof of a regular compact between this monarch and the Irish chieftains. They stipulated to become his vassals and tributaries. He was to protect them in the administration of their petty governments according to their own model: and thus we shall find that their governments were actually administered.

administered.—“ They governed their people,” saith Sir John Davies, “ by the Brehon law ; they “ made their own magistrates and officers ; they “ pardoned and punished all malefactors within “ their severall countries ; they made warre and “ peace one with another without controulment ; “ and this they did not onely during the raigne “ of Henry the Second, but afterwarde in all “ times, even untill the raigne of queen Eliza-
 “ beth.”——Not originally by the connivance of their new sovereign, or in opposition to his authority, but by his sanction and allowance, as appears from the acts of an assembly which derived their authority from his ratification.

It is in the next place observable, that the concessions of the Irish lords were uniformly made to Henry and his heirs. And as England was now confessedly the first and capital member of his dominions, by his Heirs we must understand his lawful successors to the crown of England. So that the intention of his treaties with the Irish chieftains appears to be, that the kings of England should for ever become lords paramount of the territories which these chieftains retained, and inheritours of those which they absolutely resigned : not that Henry should be warranted to grant or transfer his Irish dominions, or to sell his Irish vassals as villains of the soil, but that the stipulated obedience should be paid to the kings of England in lawful succession ; and the territories resigned should remain for ever annexed to this kingdom, and appendent on this dignity. Or, to express it in the language of the patent of Henry the Third to his son Edward¹, that they should not

not be separated from the Crown, but wholly remain to the Kings of England for ever.

By his transactions both with the natives and the original adventurers, Henry had now acquired the absolute dominion of several maritime cities, and their dependencies. The province of Leinster was claimed by Strongbow, as the heir of king Dermot, and he consented to hold it of the king and his heirs. The acquisitions in Meath appear also to have been ceded to the king; nor did the English acknowledge any rightful sovereign of this district since the death of Ma Laghlin; so that Henry had now a considerable territory, and a number of subjects in the island, and had the utmost reason to expect a speedy increase of both. And to these his subjects, he indeed granted the English laws, according to the testimony of Matthew Paris, not as a model whereby they might govern themselves, and frame their own polity; for then they had no need to express their gratitude to the king for what they might have adopted themselves, if, by their change of situation, they had lost the privileges of English subjects: neither in this case was there any propriety or necessity for an oath to the king, whereby they were bound to the observance of these laws. On the contrary, it was declared by this transaction, by their grateful acceptance of the English laws, and their solemn engagements to obey them, that, as they resigned their Irish acquisitions, and renewed their allegiance to the king, he, on his part, consented that they should still be considered as the subjects of his realm, and still retain the advantages of that constitution which, as subjects, they formerly enjoyed, and

and which he graciously declared that they should still retain in the same capacity, without any diminution of their rights, or any change in their relation to the king. Hence the necessity of a new oath, whereby they were bound in due allegiance to Henry and his heirs, and to the faithful observance of the laws of his realm in their new settlements, thus made a part and member of this realm, inseparably connected, and intimately consolidated with it.

LET it be sufficient to state these points briefly for the present, which, as they frequently recur, must be repeated and enforced in the progress of this history. And agreeably to the representations now made, it appears, that soon after he had taken possession of Dublin, and before his departure from this city^r, Henry granted it* by charter to the inhabitants of Bristol, to be held of him and his heirs with the same liberties and free customs which they enjoyed at Bristol, and throughout all his land†. And by another charter executed

^r Chart. in Arch. Civ. Dub.

* Ex Archivis Civ. Dub.

Henricus rex Angliæ, dux Normanniæ & Aquitaniæ, comes Andegaviæ, Archiepiscopis, episcopis, abbatibus, comitibus, baronibus, justiciariis, vice-comitibus ministris, & omnibus fidelibus suis Francis, Anglicis, & Hibernensibus, totius terræ suæ salutem. Sciatis me dedisse & concessisse, & presenti charta confirmasse hominibus meis de Bristow, civitatem meam de Divelin, ad inhabitandum. Quare volo & firmiter præcipio ut ipsi eam inhabitent & teneant illam de me & heredibus meis bene & in pace libere & quiete, integre & plenarie & honorifice, cum omnibus libertatibus & liberis consuetudinibus, quas homines de Bristow, habent apud Bristow, & per totam terram meam. Testibus Willo. de Braosa, Regin. de Curten. Hug. de Gandvill. Willo. Filio Andelmi, Rand. de Canvilla. Hug. de Creissi. Reg. de Pavill. Apud Divelin.

† E Manuscriptis in Biblioth. quondam episcopi Sterne.

Henricus rex, &c. archiepiscopis, &c. salutem, Sciatis me concessisse burgensibus meis de Divelin quod sint quieti de Tholonio & Passagio et Pontagio & omnibus consuetudinibus per totam terram meam

executed soon after^A, he confirms to his burgesſes of Dublin all manner of rights and immunities throughout his whole land of England, Normandy, Wales, and Ireland, wherever they and their effects ſhall be, to be fully and honourably enjoyed by them as his free and faithful ſubjects. And as it was not eaſy to induce his Engliſh ſubjects immediately to ſettle in thoſe maritime towns, he permitted the Oſtmen to take poſſeſſion of Waterford*, to whom he granted a particular charter of denization^T, whereby they were inveſted with the rights and privileges of free ſubjects, and for the future to be governed by the laws of this realm; which, by the way, affords a convincing proof that the benefit of theſe laws was conſidered as a ſpecial

VOL. I. H grace,

meam Angliæ & Normanniæ, Walliæ & Hiberniæ, ubicunque venerint ipſi & res eorum. Quare volo & firmiter præcipio quod habeant omnes libertates & quietancias & liberas conſuetudines ſuas plene & honorifice ſicut mei liberi & fideles homines, & ſint quieti de Tholonio & Paſſagio & Pontagio & omni alia conſuetudine. Et prohibeo ne quis eos ſuper his deturbet, contra hanc chartam meam, ſuper decem librarum forisfacturam. Teſtibus, &c. Apud ſanctum Laudinum.

A MSS. in Bibl. Sterne.

* Conſtat. Anno 11 Edv. I. in Turr. Bermingh. Dublin.

Edvardus, Dei gratia, rex Angliæ, dominus Hiberniæ, & dux Aquitaniæ, juſticiario ſuo Hiberniæ & omnibus aliis ballivis & fidelibus ſuis in Hibernia ad quos præſentes literæ pervenirent, Salutem. Quia per inſpectionem Chartæ domini Henrici regis filii Imperatricis quondam Domini Hiberniæ proavi noſtri, nobis conſtat quod Oſtmanni noſtri Waterford legem Anglicorum in Hibernia habere, & ſecundum iſtam legem judicari ac deduci debent; vobis mandamus, quod Gillechriſt Macgillemory, Willielmum & Johannem Macgillemory, & alios Oſtmannos de civitate & comitatu Waterford, qui de prædictis Oſtmannis prædicti domini Henrici proavi noſtri originem duxerint, legem Anglicorum in partibus illis, juxta tenorem Chartæ prædictæ habere, & eos ſecundum ipſam legem, quantum in nobis eſt, deduci faciatis, donec aliud de conſilio noſtro induxerimus ordinandum. Teſte meipſo, apud Aſton-Burnell. quinto die Octobris, Anno regni noſtri undecimo.

T Chart. Turr. Bermingh. 11 Ed. I.

grace, and that they were by no means granted in general to those who submitted, much less obtruded on any, as the great mark of conquest†.

For the better execution of the laws of England^r, it appears that Henry made a division of the districts, now subject to him, into shires or counties, which was afterwards improved and enlarged, as the extension of the English settlements, and the circumstances of the country required. Sheriffs were of consequence appointed both for the counties and cities, with judges itinerant, and other ministers of justice, officers of state, and every appendage of English government and English law. And these institutions seem to have been a part of Henry's first compact with the adventurers, and to have immediately attended his grant of their old polity and privileges; for in the first charter to the citizens of Dublin, executed before his departure from this city, we find mention of his Justices, Sheriffs, and other Officers.

† It appears from several ancient records, that on the gradual submission of the Irish lords to the crown of England, some of the most distinguished among them were admitted, though with some restrictions, to the benefit of English laws, as an especial grace and favour. Thus in the archives of Bermingham Tower, Ann. 3 Ed. II. there is the following plea, which I find copied in the Lambeth MSS. M. No. 617.—“*Prædictus Gulielmus O'Kelly est Hibernicus & non de sanguine aut progenie eorum qui gaudeant lege Anglica, quoad brevia portanda. Qui sunt O'Neale de Ultonia, O'Connochur de Connaghta, O'Brien de Thotmandia, O'Malachlin de Midia, & Mac-Morrough de Lagenia.*” And in the pleas of the crown during this reign, there is repeated mention of the five Families, “*Quinque sanguines, qui gaudent lege Anglica.*”—It is not asserted either in history or in any record that I have seen; but it seems probable that Henry the second set the example of granting this especial and distinguished privilege to the most eminent of the Irish families who submitted to him; for we shall find O'Brien of Thomond reminded, that by his submission to this prince, he was admitted to the state and dignity of the king's baron.

Officers. To complete the whole system, a chief governour, or representative of the king, was necessarily appointed, who was to exercise the royal authority, or such parts of it as might be committed to him, in the king's absence; and as the present state of Ireland, and the apprehensions of war or insurrection made it peculiarly necessary to guard against sudden accidents, or extraordinary contingencies, it was provided, by what is called a Statute of Henry Fitz-Empress^r, that in case of the death of any chief governour, the chancellor, treasurer, chief-justices, and chief baron, keeper of the rolls, and king's serjeant at law, should be empowered, with consent of the nobles of the land, to elect a successor, who was to exercise the full power and authority of this office, until the royal pleasure should be further known. Henry had now the more leisure to project such schemes of government^o, as a remarkably severe and tempestuous winter prevented him from any attempts to reduce those parts of Ireland, which had not yet acknowledged his authority.

THE continual storms having put a stop to all navigation^p, the king had not for a considerable time received the least intelligence from England or Normandy, till, at length, on his arrival at Wexford, after a residence of three months in Dublin, he met couriers, who brought the most alarming advices; That two cardinals, Albert and Theodine, delegated by the pope, had arrived in Normandy the year before, to make inquisition into the death of Becket; that waiting the arrival of Henry, until their patience was exhausted, they now summoned him to appear without delay, as

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he would avert the dreadful sentence of excommunication, and preserve his dominions from a general interdict. Such denunciations were of too much consequence to admit a longer residence in Ireland. He ordered his forces, and the officers of his household, to embark without delay, reserving three ships for the conveyance of himself and his immediate attendants.

HE was now to leave a country which, from his first appearance, afforded him the fairest prospect of success; but of which, a very considerable part, including all the western and the northern quarters of the island, he had not yet visited, much less reduced. He had built no number of forts to secure the acquisitions already made, or to awe the turbulent and fickle inhabitants; and he was to leave earl Richard behind, a powerful subject, to strengthen and encrease his influence in a country where it was already formidable, whose concessions were supposed not to have been the effects of duty and attachment, and who waited but for the absence of his royal master (as the jealousies of Henry suggested) to improve the advantages he had acquired, and to assume an independent sovereignty. In this perplexing situation, he had but a few days to make the necessary dispositions for the security of his Irish interests. He addressed himself to the original English adventurers, and by grants and promises laboured to detach them from Strongbow, and bind them firmly to himself, and to his service. To make amends for what he had taken from Fitz-Stephen, he granted him a considerable district in the neighbourhood of Dublin, to be held by knight's-service^v, at the same time entrusting

ing the maritime towns, with especial caution, to his own immediate dependents. Waterford was committed to Humphrey de Bohun, Robert Fitz-Bernard, and Hugh de Gundville, with a train of twenty knights. In Wexford were stationed William Fitz-Andelm, Philip of Hastings, and Philip de Braosa, with a like number of attendants: Before his departure from Dublin he had promised, and now executed, an important grant to Hugh de Lacy of all the territory of Meath, where there was no fortified place, and where of consequence no particular reservation was necessary, to be held of him and his heirs, by the service of fifty knights^a, in as full a manner as it had been enjoyed by Murchard Hu Melaghlin, or any other. He also constituted this lord his governour of Dublin, with a guard of twenty knights. Robert Fitz-Stephen, and Maurice Fitz-Gerald, were made his coadjutors, with an equal train^c; and these, with others of the first adventurers, under the pretence of an honourable appointment, were thus obliged to reside at Dublin, subject to the immediate inspection of de Lacy, in whom Henry seems to have placed his chief confidence. In the neighbourhood of each city, lands were assigned for the maintenance of the knights and soldiers. A castle was directed to be built in Dublin, and fortresses in other convenient places; and sensible of the advantages to be gained by the valour and activity of private adventurers, the king readily yielded to the request of John de Courcy^r, a baron distinguished by his enterprizing genius and abilities in war, and granted him the entire province of Ulster, provided he could reduce it by force of arms.

H A V I N G

HAVING thus made his dispositions in Ireland as effectually as the short space of three weeks could permit. Henry turned his attention to more pressing, and at present more important objects. In granting large tracts to the most enterprising of his nobles, he pursued the same measures which William the Conqueror had taken for extending his territories on the Marches of England. It was a method evidently well calculated for making conquests without expence to the crown, not for preserving peace in a country once subdued, or quieting the jealousies of an absent prince, who had learned suspicion from his experience of mankind. The misfortunes, which Ireland felt for ages, may be fairly imputed to the present fatal interruption of Henry's progress. The folly and the insolence, the injustice, baseness, and ingratitude of his avowed and secret enemies recalled him from an engagement worthy of his abilities^x. He embarked at Wexford on the feast of Easter, and landed at Pembrokehire, where it was the first care of this prince, who lay under the heavy displeasure of the church, to march on foot to the Cathedral of Saint David, and there perform his devotions, with an ostentation of piety and humility. Hence he passed on with the utmost speed, and with his eldest son, whose secret practices against an indulgent father he had but too good reasons to suspect, proceeded to meet the cardinals in Normandy. Their first requisitions were so haughty and exorbitant, that Henry broke up the assembly^y, declaring that he would return to Ireland, where he had much to do, and leave them to execute their legantine commission as they might. This spirited answer produced another congress,

congress, and another treaty, upon terms less unreasonable and injurious. And when the articles of accommodation were adjusted, the king's submissions accepted, and his absolution pronounced, Pope Alexander readily consented to seal this reconciliation^r, by confirming the grant of Ireland made by Adrian. His brief recites the propriety of allowing the just acts of his predecessors, and the gifts made by the late pope to Henry, of the dominion of Ireland: ratifying the same with the reservation of Peter-pence, and on the former condition of reforming the barbarous natives, and regulating their disordered church.



C H A P.

^r Brompton.

C H A P. IV.

Dispositions of the Irish chieftains.—Marriage and death of De Quiny.—Lacy confers with O'Ruarc.—Death of O'Ruarc.—Rebellion of Henry's sons, and general insurrection against the king.—Strongbow recalled from Ireland.—Revolt of the Irish lords.—The king's forces distressed and discontented.—Mutual jealousies of Hervey and Raymond.—Strongbow chief governour.—He appoints Raymond general.—His successes.—He retires in discontent.—Expedition to Munster.—Defeat of the Ostmen.—Raymond recalled.—Insurrection and massacre at Waterford.—Raymond espouses the sister of earl Strongbow.—Desolation of Meath by Roderic.—His retreat.—Limerick taken.—Submission and treaty of Roderic.—Henry alarmed by Mountmorres.—Raymond commanded to attend him.—Prepares to depart.—Limerick besieged by O'Brien.—Raymond prevailed on to march against him.—His successes in Thomond and Desmond.—Death of Strongbow.—Perfidy of O'Brien.—Generous observation of king Henry.—Character of Strongbow by the Irish annalists,—and by Giraldus.—Raymond and Fitz-Andelm chief governours.—Arrival of Vivian the legate.—Bulls of Adrian and Alexander promulged.—Character and conduct of Fitz-Andelm.—Expedition of De Courcy into Ulster.—His exploits.—Invasion of Connaught by Cogan unsuccessful.—Divisions of the Irish chieftains,—and miserable condition of the whole island.

HENRY

HENRY at his departure^r, as Davies justly observes, left not one true subject behind him, more than he found on coming over. The Irish chieftains who had submitted to become his vassals with so much levity and indifference, were little solicitous to adhere to their submissions any longer than terror or necessity might oblige them. But as the impression made by the power and greatness of their new sovereign was yet lively and forcible; as their local feuds and jealousies had never been suspended; and as the English settlers had not as yet discovered any design of extending their acquisitions, the territories of the new adventurers were for a while unmolested, and seemed to wear an appearance of security and peace. Strongbow found himself at leisure to retire to Ferns^p, in order to solemnize the marriage of his daughter with Robert de Quiny, one of the nobles who had engaged in the Irish war, whom he created constable and standard-bearer of Leinster^k, with a considerable grant of lands. But Quiny did not long enjoy his honours and estate; for the earl, some time after, being obliged to march into Osally, to exact his tribute from a refractory vassal; his forces, on their return, were attacked in the rear, and the standard-bearer, with some others, fell in the fury of the first sudden assault.

LACY proceeded, in consequence of his late grant^v, to make such dispositions in Meath as might secure the subjection of this district. He parcelled out his lands to his friends and adherents, in order to establish a powerful English settlement, and began to erect forts to keep the old inhabitants in awe. In the provinces ceded to Henry or his sub-

jects,

^r A. D. 1173.

^p Girald.

^k Regan.

^v Ibid.

jects, or afterwards gained by their arms, certain Irish natives, of the most distinguished families, were, by the king's licence and command, suffered to reside and enjoy certain portions of their old possessions, to pay tribute to the crown as foedaries, but were not as subjects governed by the law of England. Thus some of the descendants of the family of Mac Murchad were for many ages resident in Leinster, as well as some inferior chiefs, who professed at least to be tributaries to the king of England, but governed their different septs according to the old native institutions. This, which is expressly affirmed by Finglas, in his Breviate of Ireland, appears evidently from the tenour of history, and from innumerable public records of this kingdom. In like manner, notwithstanding the extensive grant of Meath to Hugh de Lacy, O'Ruarc of Breffney still enjoyed the eastern part of this province by virtue of the arrangements made by Roderic. And this proud and violent chieftain could not but regard the present project of an extensive English settlement in Meath with an indignant jealousy. He found, or sought some occasion to complain of injuries done to his interests or property by the new settlers^r. He repaired to Dublin, and demanded redress from Lacy; but the pretensions on each side being discussed without any final agreement, a day was appointed for another conference to be held on the hill of Taragh. This was agreeable to the old Irish custom, of adjusting accidental differences by a meeting of the chiefs, at a distance from their respective residences, and on some eminence where they might be most secure from treachery. The English historians formally relate, that, the night before

before this conference, Griffith, nephew to Maurice Fitz-Gerald, dreamed that he saw a number of wild boars rush on Lacy and his uncle, and that one more horrid than the rest would have slain them, if he had not rescued them by killing the monster : that, alarmed by this dream, he would have dissuaded them from the intended interview ; but that Lacy slighted his superstitious fears. It indeed required no dream or vision to create fears and suspicions on occasion of these parlies, which frequently ended in bloodshed, and to which the parties always came prepared against violence or treachery. The chiefs arrived on the place appointed, and, engagements being made on each side to preserve peace and amity, they met, with a few attendants, while the rest of their respective trains were appointed to retire at due distance. Griffith is said to have been so possessed with his dream, that he chose out seven of his associates of distinguished valour, whom he drew as near to the place of interview as he might, without suspicion, ready to advance, if there should be occasion for their service. In the mean time they continued, under the pretence of amusement, to ride in tournament round the field. Lacy and Fitz-Gerald on one side, and the Irish chieftain on the other, proceeded in their conference without any prospect of accommodation, 'till O'Ruarc retiring, as it is said, under the pretence of necessity, gave the signal to his party, who rushed up the hill, while their leader returned with a countenance of deadly wrath and fury. Fitz-Gerald drew his sword ; and scarcely had he called to Lacy to defend himself, when O'Ruarc assailed him furiously with his battle-ax. His interpreter interposed, and was slain ;

Lacy

Lacy was twice beaten to the ground, but rescued by Fitz-Gerald: the English party was at hand, and soon repelled the assailants. O'Ruarc in his retreat attempted to gain his horse, but, as he mounted, was killed by Griffith. His three equerries shared the same fate; and his whole train was pursued with considerable slaughter. The circumstance of the dream, and the minuteness with which this transaction is related, might create some suspicions that the English party were not entirely clear from being the aggressors, and that care was taken to frame their narrative, or at least to aggravate the misconduct of the Irish. However this may be, the event was particularly favourable to Lacy, as it freed him from a turbulent and dangerous rival. O'Ruarc was considered as a traitor and rebel, and his head sent into England to the king.

INCIDENTS of this kind, however plausibly represented, were by the natives considered in the most odious light. They warmly retorted the charge of treachery upon the foreigners; and every day produced complaints of their injustice, cruelty, and oppression, wherever they had any intercourse with the native inhabitants. In many instances such complaints must have been just; for several of the English leaders were proud, indigent, and rapacious: but whether just or no, at the same time that they discovered the enmity of the Irish, they also served to confirm and enflame it; and the present critical situation of king Henry gave both opportunity and encouragement to these proud and restless natives to avow their animosity.

THE

THE spirit and address which had extricated him from his controversy with the pope^T, seemed to confirm his grandeur and felicity. A numerous progeny gave both lustre and authority to his crown. The king's precaution in establishing the several branches of his family seemed well calculated to prevent all jealousies among the brothers, and to perpetuate the greatness of his royal line. He had ordered Henry, his eldest son, to be crowned king, and had appointed him successor to the kingdom of England, the dutchy of Normandy, and the counties of Anjou, Maine, and Touraine; to Richard and Geoffry were assigned their respective territories; and Ireland was probably destined for the appanage of John, his fourth son, although the king might not as yet have declared his intentions. He also negotiated a marriage in favour of this last prince with Adelais, daughter of the count of Savoy and Maurienne, and was to receive as her dowry very considerable demesnes in Piedmont, Savoy, Bresse, and Dauphiny. But this exaltation of his family excited the jealousy and envy of his neighbours; and these very sons, whose fortune he was so anxious to establish, were made the means of disturbing his government, and embittering his future days.

To cement his accommodation with the French king, Henry had consented that the ceremony of crowning his eldest son should be repeated, together with his consort Margaret, a princess of France, and allowed them to visit their father-in-law at Paris, who sought this opportunity of enflaming the ambition of young Henry. Although it had been the constant custom of France, ever since
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the accession of the Capetian line, to crown the son during the life-time of the father, without conferring on him any present participation of royal dominion, yet Louis took pains to persuade his son-in-law that he had now a title to real sovereignty, and prevailed on him at his return to make a formal demand, that either the crown of England, or the dutchy of Normandy, should be immediately resigned to him. The extravagant proposal was rejected; the prince expressed his discontent in terms highly undutiful; and, returning clandestinely to Paris, was protected and supported by the French monarch.

IN the first surprize and alarm at this event, from which king Henry expected some distressing circumstances, he received intelligence of new misfortunes: Eleanor his queen, provoked at the infidelities of her husband, seized this occasion of interesting her sons Richard and Geoffry in her resentments; persuaded them that they also were intitled to present possession of the territories assigned to them, engaged them to fly secretly to the court of France, and was herself meditating an escape to the same court, when she was arrested by Henry's order in her disguise of man's apparel, and confined. The combination of these princes against an indulgent father had been projected, and was openly countenanced by Louis. Princes were not ashamed to espouse their unnatural quarrel. Barons, disgusted by a vigilant government, were more desirous of being ruled by young princes, ignorant of public affairs, remiss in their conduct, and profuse in their grants; and, as the king had ensured to his sons the succession to every particular province

province in his dominions, the nobles had no dread of adhering to those who, they knew, must sometime become their sovereigns. Prompted by these motives, many of the Norman nobility had deserted to his son Henry. The Breton and Gascon barons embraced the quarrel of Richard and Geoffry. The Disaffection had spread through England. The earls of Leinster and Chester, in particular, declared openly against the king. The counts of Flanders, Bologne, Blois, and Eu, were prompted by jealousy of Henry's greatness, and the hopes of advantage from the inconsiderate promises and grants of an ambitious youth, to unite with the king of France. William, king of Scotland, also joined in the confederacy; so that Henry now saw the storm of war and rebellion rising in every quarter of his extensive dominions. Although the pope had been prevailed on to denounce his censure against the rebellious princes and their adherents, yet Henry soon found that his effectual resource must be in his own activity and valour. He employed those treasures he had prudently reserved, in hiring twenty thousand of those mercenary troops called Brabancons, whose profession it was to fight for any prince who would engage them. At the same time he found it necessary to withdraw several of his garrisons from Ireland, as well as to claim the attendance of some of his barons and commanders in this country. Earl Richard flew to his assistance in Normandy with such alacrity and zeal, that Henry, convinced of his attachment, entrusted him with the government of Gisors.

THE first accounts of a powerful confederacy^r, formed against the king of England, were received
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by the Irish chieftains with the utmost joy ; and no sooner had earl Richard and the other English lords departed, than they openly disavowed their late submissions, and boldly denounced the vengeance of an injured people against the remains of their invaders. The English army was not only weakened, but mutinous and discontented. It had been entrusted to the command of Hervey of Mountmorres, to whom Raymond le Gros was second in authority ; and these leaders were by no means united with that firmness and cordiality which their common interest required. Hervey was proud, impatient of a rival, and jealous of his influence ; rigid and severe in his discipline, he restrained the soldiers from plundering, a liberty which they claimed as in some sort necessary to supply the deficiencies of their pay : Raymond, of more conciliating manners, more indulgent to the passions and necessities of the soldiery, for whose welfare and security he appeared eminently solicitous ; gentle to their faults, and affecting rather to appear their companion than their commander ; neither delicate in his fare, nor curious in his apparel, cheerfully sharing all the hardships of a military life. He was of consequence more beloved ; and the envy of Mountmorres was enflamed by his popularity. Their mutual jealousies prevented any effectual opposition to the spirit now raised among the Irish princes, and might have proved fatal to the English interest, had not Henry been soon enabled to provide a remedy for the evil. He summoned earl Strongbow to attend him at Rouen, and communicated his intentions of committing the affairs of Ireland to his sole direction. The earl expressed the utmost alacrity to serve his royal

royal master ; but observed, that he had already experienced the envy and malignity of his secret enemies, that, if he should appear in so distinguished a character as that of the king's deputy in Ireland, their insidious practices would be renewed, and his conduct misrepresented and maligned. He therefore requested that a colleague might be appointed in the commission, and recommended Raymond as a person of approved loyalty and abilities, as well as highly acceptable to the soldiery. Henry replied, with an appearance of regard and confidence, extorted from him by his present circumstances, that he had his free consent to employ Raymond in any service he should deem necessary, not as a colleague, but an assistant ; that he relied entirely on the earl, and implicitly entrusted every thing to his direction. To reward his services, and enliven his zeal, he granted him the town of Wexford, together with a fort erected at Wicklow, and thus dismissed him with the most gracious expressions of favour.

THE earl landed at Dublin, where he was received with the respect due to the royal commission. He signified the king's pleasure that Robert Fitz-Bernard^c, with the garrison of Waterford, should instantly embark, and repair to Normandy ; and that Robert Fitz-Stephen, and Maurice de Prendergast, should attend the service of their liege lord in England ; and agreeably to the king's instructions took on him the custody of Dublin and Waterford, as well as of his own city of Wexford. Hugh de Lacy, and Milo de Cogan, were, with the other lords, commanded to repair to England for the service of the king ; and while the forces,

VOL. I.

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who

c Regan.

who were to support the government of earl Strongbow, were thus considerably weakened, their contents were at the same time enflamed to the utmost, and he had the mortification to hear the boldest remonstrances against the conduct of his uncle Mountmorres. The soldiers presented themselves in a body before the earl, requiring that Raymond le Gros should be appointed to command them^a; if not, they threatened to return to their native country, or to engage in the service of the Irish chiefs, who were now in arms, and ready for hostilities. Strongbow was too sensible of the difficulties of his present situation not to comply with these demands, however insolent, and not only to grant their favourite general, but also to engage them in some expeditions which might afford plunder, as he had improvidently dissipated the sums assigned for their pay. Raymond was therefore appointed to march into Ofsally^c to chastise the defection of some petty lords of this district. He over-ran, and ravaged the country without resistance, and, proceeding with his booty to Lismore, committed the like depredations in this city and the adjacent lands. On his return by the sea-side, he found some vessels at anchor, which he directed to be laden with the spoil, in order to convey it to the town of Waterford. The wind was for some time contrary, which encouraged the men of Cork, who had been acquainted with these transactions, to form the design of destroying this little fleet of transports. The necessities of Henry having obliged him to withdraw the English garrison from the city, it had been resumed by Macarthy of Desmond; and now the inhabitants, to manifest their zeal against his enemies, hastily fitted out thirty barks,

barks, and fell with the utmost fury on the English detachment, which had not yet weighed anchor. Their assault, however sudden and unexpected, was sustained with due spirit; and the death of their commander, who fell by the arm of a gallant Welshman, soon decided the contest in favour of the English. They took eight vessels from the enemy, and sailed in triumph to the place of destination. Raymond had been informed of this action, and was hastening to the support of his party with a select body of twenty knights and sixty horsemen, when he suddenly found himself encountered by the prince of Desmond, who on his part was equally solicitous to support his vassals of Cork. The Irish chief, however, was soon obliged to retire; and Raymond, after some inconsiderable attempts to disturb him in his march, and to seize his prey, entered Waterford in all the pomp of a victorious general.

TRIVIAL as these actions were, they confirmed the opinion which the soldiery had conceived of their new general, served to supply their present necessities, and seemed the prelude to more important successes. Raymond himself appears to have entertained no indifferent opinion of his own services. He was now in the very height of popularity, and determined to avail himself of this advantage^a. He had conceived a passion for Basilia, sister to earl Richard, and took the present occasion to demand her in marriage, together with the post of constable, and standard-bearer of Leinster, during the minority of a daughter of Robert de Quiny, the late son-in-law of Strongbow. The earl, probably from a jealousy of the rising power

and influence of this lord, received his overture with a coldness and reserve which sufficiently expressed his disapprobation. Raymond, provoked and mortified, retired abruptly into Wales, under pretence of taking possession of some lands devolved to him by the death of his father, and the army was once again entrusted to the command of Hervey of Mountmorres.

HERVEY was but too sensible how much his own character had been obscured by the superiour lustre of his rivalⁿ, and now determined to engage in some brave enterprize, which might regain him the affections of the soldiery, and emulate the successes of le Gros. He represented to earl Strongbow the necessity of speedily repressing that spirit of revolt and insurrection which had appeared among the Irish princes; and as the dispositions lately made in Meath seemed to have established an effectual barrier against the king of Connaught, he advised him to bend his whole force against the insurgents of Munster, and by chastising their revolt, and reducing them to due obedience, to strike terror into those who were equally disaffected, but had not yet dared to commence hostilities. The earl, whose genius was better fitted to adopt and execute, than to form a plan of operations, readily yielded to these instances, and, in conjunction with Mountmorres, led a considerable body of forces to the City of Cashel. When their troops had been here reviewed, and information received of the posture and numbers of the enemy, Hervey prevailed upon him, in order to give their armament a more brilliant and formidable appearance, to dispatch his orders to Dublin, that a considerable

considerable party of the garrison, consisting of Ostmen, who had engaged in the service of the English, should, without delay, join their main body. As this detachment advanced, the fame of its motions spread through the country, and was conveyed into the quarters of the enemies. O'Brien of Thomond, a valiant and sagacious chieftain, and implacably averse to the English interests, conceived the design of cutting off this body, as the most effectual means of weakening and dispiriting the enemy. He suffered the Ostmen to advance as far as to Thurles, and there to encamp in a state of careless security, when falling suddenly upon them, he wreaked his fury upon men utterly unprepared for defence. Four hundred of the detachment, together with their four principal commanders, were slaughtered upon the field; and, to complete the triumph of O'Brien, earl Richard, on receiving the intelligence of this misfortune, retired with all the precipitation of a routed general, and threw himself for safety into Waterford.

THIS disgrace of the English arms, which was magnified by fame into a decisive victory obtained over Strongbow and his united powers*, served as a signal to the disaffected Irish to rise up in arms. Several of the Leinster chieftains, who had lately made

H Ann. Ult. MS.

* The Irish annalists assure us, that, on the report of Strongbow's march into Munster, Roderic advanced with an army into Ormand, in order to oppose him; that the news of his approach determined the English leaders to send to Dublin for a reinforcement; that, this reinforcement arriving safe, Strongbow led his powers to the plain of Durlus; that he here engaged O'Brien and Dal-cais, the army of Jer-Connaught, and the invincible army of Gil-Muiredhy, under the command of Connor Moenmoy, son of Roderic, and was defeated with the loss of seven hundred (or seventeen hundred) men. Ann. Lagen. MS.

made their submissions, and bound themselves to the service of King Henry, openly disclaimed all their engagements. Even Donald Kevanagh, son of the late king Dermot, who had hitherto adhered to the English even in their utmost Difficulties, now declared against them, and asserted a title to the kingdom of Leinster; while Roderic, on his part, was active in uniting the princes of Ulster^r, the native lords of Meath, and other chiefs, against their common enemy.

STRONGBOW was well acquainted with the fickleness of the Irish^r; and justly sensible of the consequences of being reduced to act on the defensive, instead of seeking his enemies in their own territories^r. He had also reason to apprehend a revival of discontent and mutiny amongst his own soldiers. He, therefore, without the least hesitation or delay, sent into Wales^o, earnestly entreating Raymond to return with such forces as he could procure, and freely offering to gratify him in all his late demands. Nothing could be more flattering to Raymond than this application. He was called to relieve his countrymen from the distress in which they had been involved by his rival; he was acknowledged to be their great resource in all alarming circumstances; and the earl, who had proudly refused to grant him his sister in marriage, was now reduced to court him to accept her hand. He made his preparations with all the speed and alacrity of a man prompted by the powerful motives of love, pride, and ambition; and collecting thirty leaders of his own kindred, one hundred horsemen, and three hundred archers, all hardy and well-appointed Welshmen,

men, embarked in twenty transports, and steered his course to Waterford.

IF we may believe Giraldus, nothing could have been more critically seasonable than his arrival. The Townsmen, naturally averse to the English invaders, provoked by their rigorous oppressions, and encouraged by their present weakness and apparent distress, are said to have formed the desperate purpose of freeing themselves from their masters by a general massacre; but, at the very moment of execution, Raymond's fleet appeared in the harbour, and suspended the attempt. Whether they were either bold enough, or strong enough to have really formed such a scheme against a considerable, and to them a formidable army, certain it is that they entertained a malignant aversion against the English, and waited but a fair occasion to discover it, as was soon experienced. At the first interview between Raymond and earl Richard, it was agreed to march without delay to Wexford, probably to give some check to the spirit of rebellion, which had appeared in Leinster. The garrison left at Waterford, little suspecting any violence or treachery within the walls, acted with the confidence of men surrounded with their friends and adherents, and thus favoured the designs of their secret enemies. Their commander, crossing the Sure in a small bark, was, with his few attendants, murdered by the mariners; and no sooner had the news of this massacre reached the town, than all the English, who could be found unarmed, were suddenly assailed, and slaughtered without distinction of age, sex, or condition. Those of the garrison, who had opportunity to
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take arms, joined their associates in the citadel, called Reginald's Tower, and there not only defended themselves, but annoyed their besiegers with such spirit and address, as at length drove them from the city, and reduced them to sue for peace with the most abject submission. They glossed over their late barbarity by such pretences as they could invent, and gladly complied with the most rigorous terms of accommodation that could be proposed.

WEXFORD, in the mean time, was a scene of joy and festivity. Basilis, sister of earl Strongbow, had arrived thither with a magnificent train from Dublin, and was solemnly espoused by Raymond, who received a large portion of lands as her dowry, and was invested with the office of constable, and standard-bearer of Leinster. But, even in the midst of the nuptial rites, intelligence arrived, that Roderic, at the head of a large confederate army, had suddenly passed the Shannon, entered the territory of Meath, where Hugh Tyrrel commanded in the absence of Lacy, expelled the English colonists, laid their settlements waste, obliged Tyrrel to abandon the forts lately erected, and burned them to the ground; so that the fury of his incursion had been felt even to the walls of Dublin. The occasion was too pressing to admit of the least delay; so that the very morning after the celebration of his nuptials, the bridegroom was obliged to put on his armour. He led his troops to Dublin, determined to seek these invaders; but the Irish chieftains, actuated by sudden and transient impressions of passion, rather than any reasonable and settled principle of duty or public spirit,

spirit, were contented with the devastation committed in Meath, and by no means inclined to continue their hostilities. Roderic, the leader of this undetermined, ungoverned, and ill-united body, found himself obliged to retreat into his own province, and leave the enemy to repair the havock he had made. The earl and Raymond arrived time enough to precipitate the flight of some of the Irish parties, by falling on their rear, and killing one hundred and fifty. The settlements in Meath were re-established^r; and Tyrrel had the charge of rebuilding those forts which the Irish had destroyed.

THIS success, together with the death of Donald Kevanagh, who had been killed in an engagement with a party of his countrymen in the English service, awed the spirit of disaffection in Leinster, and established an appearance of order and tranquillity through the English territories, so as to leave earl Richard at leisure to advert to the affairs of Munster, and to take measures for reducing the prince of Thomond^k, who possessed himself of Limerick, and continued to bid defiance to the English power. The siege of Limerick was undertaken by Raymond, who, with a chosen body of about six hundred, marched against the revolted chieftain. They arrived without opposition at the banks of the Shannon, which surrounds this city; but here found the bridges broken, and their further approaches stopped by the rapidity of the stream. Two of their boldest knights adventured to pass where they conceived the river to be fordable, and with success; but, returning to encourage and conduct their associates,

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one of them was drowned. A third passed safely, but found himself unsupported, and exposed to the enemy; till Raymond, advancing from the rear, spurred boldly through the river; and his forces, thus encouraged, followed their leader without further hesitation, and gained the opposite bank, with the loss of two only of their body. The enemy, who were pouring down to oppose their passage, stopped with astonishment at this intrepidity, and fled at once without striking a blow. They were pursued by the English with considerable slaughter, who thus became masters of the city without resistance. The soldiers were enriched by plunder, and the reputation of their favourite general was increased by this bold and successful adventure.

IN the mean time, Roderic, convinced by repeated experience of the instability and perfidy of his subordinate chieftains, and the ineffective nature of a vassal army, despaired of contending any longer, and determined to save his own province at least from the depredations of an incensed and victorious enemy, by a submission. Yet, not unconscious of his dignity, he declined all application to earl Strongbow, and determined to treat immediately with the king of England. This monarch had, by the most extraordinary exertion of vigour and abilities, happily eluded all the attempts of his enemies on the continent. His English rebels were subdued, his sons had submitted, the king of Scots had been defeated, was taken prisoner, and obliged to purchase his liberty at the expence of the ancient independency of his crown; and Henry, now seated peaceably in England, was forming schemes of legislation for improving and perpetuating

perpetuating the welfare of his kingdom, when he was attended at Windfor by three deputies of Roderic, Catholicus, archbishop of Tuam, the abbot of faint Brandan, and master Lawrence, and he is styled, chancellor to the king of Connaught.

THE terms of accommodation are still extant^r, and shew what were Henry's ideas of a conquest, and what kind of dominion he esteemed sufficient to denominate him lord of Ireland.

RODERIC, on his part, consented to do homage, and pay tribute, as liege-man to the king of England; on which conditions he was allowed to hold the kingdom of Connaught, as well as his other lands and sovereignties in as ample a manner as he had enjoyed them before the arrival of Henry in Ireland. His vassals were to hold under him in peace, as long as they paid their tribute, and continued faithful to the king of England; in which Roderic was to enforce their due obedience, and for this purpose to call to his assistance the English government, if necessary. The annual tribute to be paid was every tenth merchantable hide, as well from Connaught as the rest of the island, excepting those parts under the immediate dominion of the king of England and his barons, Dublin with its appurtenances, Meath with all its appurtenances, Wexford and all Leinster, and Waterford with its lands, as far as to Dungarvan inclusive; in all which districts, Roderic was not to interfere, nor claim any power or authority. The Irish, who had fled from hence, were to return, and either to pay their tribute, or to perform the services required by their tenures, at the option

option of their immediate lords; and if refractory, Roderic, at the requisition of their lords, was to compel them to return. He was to take hostages from his vassals, such as he and his liege lord should think proper; and on his part to deliver either these or others to his lord, as Henry should appoint. His vassals were to furnish hawks and hounds annually to the English monarch, and were not to detain any tenant of his immediate demesnes in Ireland, contrary to his royal pleasure and command*.

THIS treaty was solemnly ratified in a grand council of prelates and temporal barons^k, among whom we find the archbishop of Dublin one of the subscribing witnesses. As metropolitan of Leinster, he was now become an English subject, and was probably summoned upon this occasion as one obliged to attend, and who had a right to assist in the king's great council. It is also observable that Henry now treated with Roderic not merely as a provincial prince, but as monarch of Ireland. This is evidently implied and supposed in the articles; although his monarchical powers and privileges were little more than nominal, frequently disregarded, and opposed by the Irish toparchs. Even by their submissions to Henry many of them renounced and disavowed the sovereignty of Roderic, in effect. But now his †

supremacy

* At the same time that this treaty was concluded, Henry, as a mark of his sovereignty, invested Augustin, an Irish ecclesiastic, with the bishoprick of Waterford, then vacant, and directed him to be consecrated by the archbishops of Dublin and Cashel. Hoved. Brompt.

^k Hoveden.

† This is the idea which the Irish entertained of this treaty, as appears from the following extract from their annals.

"An. 1175. Catholicus O'Dubhy came out of England from the empress's son; with the peace of Ireland and the royal sovereignty of all Ireland to Rory O'Connor, and his own Coigedh (province) to each provincial king in Ireland, and their rents to Rory." Ann.

an. MS.

supremacy seems to be industriously acknowledged, that the present submission might appear virtually the submission of all the subordinate princes, so as to invest Henry with the complete sovereignty of the whole island. But the marks of this sovereignty were no more than homage and tribute; in every other particular the regal rights of Roderic are left inviolate. The English laws and government (as hath been already observed) were evidently to be enforced only in the English pale; and even within this district the Irish tenant might live in peace, as the subject of the Irish monarch, bound only to pay his quota of tribute, and not to take arms against the king of England.

THIS submission of Roderic, and his solemn recognition of Henry's sovereignty, promised additional strength to the English interest in Ireland. But the jealousy and suspicions which the king was ever ready to conceive of his barons in this kingdom, once more threatened to embarrass and distress them. Hervey of Mountmorres, by marrying the Daughter of Maurice Fitz-Gerald, and cousin-german of Raymond, seemed to have formed a stricter and more friendly connection with this lord. * A daughter of Strongbow was also given in marriage to a youth of the house of Fitz-Gerald^s. Maurice himself had lately returned from Wales, and was indulged with a grant of Wicklow-castle, added to a district which Henry had already given him in Ofally. Other leaders of reputation were rewarded

* Giraldus makes the son of William Fitz-Gerald marry the earl's daughter by the princess of Leinster, an infant of about four years old. But all historians, and authentic records, agree, that this young lady (the only child which Strongbow left by Eva) was, at the age of fourteen, married to William earl Marshal.

rewarded by valuable possessions ; so that the English lords seemed to be united more firmly than ever, and all nearly interested in extending and securing their settlements. But Giraldus assures us that the envy and discontent of Hervey still rankled in his breast ; that he purposedly sought an alliance with the daughter of Fitz-Gerald, to insinuate himself into the confidence of Raymond, and watch the motions and designs of his old rival. Whether he had really observed any thing alarming in his conduct, or whether malice and jealousy had invented matters of complaint against him, his emissaries were secretly dispatched to Henry, by whom he made the most unfavourable representations of Raymond's conduct. They assured the king, that this lord evidently aspired to an independent sovereignty in Ireland ; that for this purpose he had practised all the arts of factious popularity with too great success, and was no longer solicitous to conceal his disloyal schemes ; that he had secured Limerick to himself, and in this and other cities had stationed garrisons devoted to his service, and sworn secretly to support his designs ; that the infection had spread through the whole army, which waited but the command of Raymond to engage in any enterprize, however repugnant to the interest and authority of their prince. Such representations, urged with a plausible appearance, and fair profession of loyalty, by a baron of distinguished character and particular credit with the king, and countenanced by the late tumultuous declarations of the army in favour of Raymond, made the intended impression upon a prince who had ever dreaded this consequence from the encreasing power and success of the adventurers in

in Ireland. Four commissioners were immediately dispatched to Dublin; Robert de Poer, Osbert of Hereford, William Bendeger, and Adam of Germany, two of whom were to conduct Raymond to the king, and two to remain in order to inspect the affairs of the kingdom to watch the conduct of Strongbow, and to learn the dispositions of the other lords.

THE commissioners were received with due respectⁿ. Raymond, who saw the machinations of his secret enemy, declared his readiness to obey the pleasure of his liege lord, and prepared for his departure; but was for some time detained by contrary winds. In this interval, intelligence arrives that O'Brien of Thomond, the vigorous and formidable enemy of the English power, had laid siege to Limerick; that the garrison stationed there under the command of Meyler of Saint David's had exhausted their provisions, were cut off from all further supplies, and must inevitably perish either by famine, or the sword of an implacable enemy, if not immediately relieved. This intelligence was the more distressing to earl Strongbow, as he himself laboured under great bodily infirmity, and was to be deprived of a commander on whom he had the greatest reliance in this critical emergency. He, however, mustered his forces, and prepared for the relief of Limerick with all the alacrity in his power, when the soldiers once more clamoured for Raymond, insolently refusing to march against O'Brien, unless their favourite general were to command. The king's commissioners were consulted, and readily agreed that they should delay their departure, and that Raymond should undertake

undertake the conduct of this expedition. The utmost reluctance was affected on his part ; he was solicited and entreated both by the earl and the commissioners ; and at length yielded, with conscious triumph over his malignant enemy.

HIS forces were composed of fourscore knights^r, two hundred cavalry, and three hundred archers, together with the Irish troops of Kenselagh and Ossory, whose chieftains united with the English on this occasion, from a violent personal hatred and jealousy of O'Brien. As he advanced to Munster, he was informed that the prince of Thomond had abandoned the siege of Limerick, and leading his forces to Cashel, had strongly entrenched himself in a defile, through which the English were to pass, and there waited their approach. He was soon witness of the situation of the enemy, and saw himself opposed by no inconsiderable army, posted to advantage behind their works. He disposed his troops, and prepared for the assault. His Irish forces were struck with the appearance of the enemy, and began to suspect the resolution of their allies, who marched to action, not with the violence and tumult to which they had been accustomed, but with the calmness of experienced and determined valour. The prince of Ossory thought it incumbent on him to remonstrate with the English, and to shew them the necessity of exerting themselves. He bluntly told them that they must conquer or be destroyed ; for that they were far from refuge or support ; and should they presume to give way, he and his countrymen would instantly join the enemy. The only answer to this insolence was a bold and vigorous onset, which, though

though received with becoming spirit, was finally successful ; the men of Thomond were driven from their entrenchments with considerable slaughter ; and in their flight spread the utmost terror and dismay through the Irish of Munster. O'Brien, wearied out by an unsuccessful contest, determined to make his peace, and to this end proposed an interview with the English general. At the same time Roderic, in pursuance of his late treaty, repaired to Raymond, to deliver his hostages, and take the oaths of fealty ; so that in one day this lord had the honour of receiving the submissions of the king of Connaught, and of the prince of Thomond, who renewed his engagements to the king of England and his heirs, and gave hostages as a security for his future allegiance.

AN unnatural quarrel in the family of Mac Arthy^a, prince of Desmond, not unusual among the Irish chieftains, afforded Raymond a fair occasion of continuing his progress in Munster, and added to the honour he had already acquired. Cormac, eldest son of this prince, had risen in rebellion against his father, deprived him of his territory, and imprisoned him. Mac Arthy, who had sworn allegiance to the king of England, represented his wrongs to Raymond, and required his protection, promising considerable advantages to this general and his associates, if, by their assistance, he should be restored to his dominions. The English knights, ever ready to engage in any enterprize which promised to enrich them, earnestly pressed their leader to march without delay to the assistance of this injured prince, and soon prevailed. They entered the territories of Desmond in an

VOL. I.

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hostile

^a Girald.

hostile manner, ravaging and plundering without mercy, 'till Cormac was compelled to stop their progress by a submission. His father was re-instated in his territories; and to requite the baseness of his son, cast him into that prison from which he himself was rescued, and soon after put him to death. By this expedition Raymond not only supplied his forces and the garrison of Limerick with provisions, but obtained from Mac Arthy a valuable grant of lands in that part of Desmond called Kerry, which he enjoyed unmolested, and transmitted to his posterity.

BUT now, in the midst of his success, he receives the alarming intelligence of the death of earl Strongbow, who expired in Dublin after a tedious indisposition*, occasioned by a mortification in his foot. The fickleness of the Irish, their real abhorrence of their invaders, notwithstanding their pretended submissions, and their precipitation in revolting and taking arms on any extraordinary emergency, were but too well known, and made it necessary for the English government to keep this event concealed, 'till their forces were collected from the distant quarters of the kingdom; and lest the secret should be discovered by any miscarriage of the letter which Basilisa now sent to her husband, it was conceived in mysterious terms. She informed him, that her great tooth, which had ached so long, was at last fallen out†, and therefore entreated him to return to Dublin with all imaginable speed.

RAYMOND, who perfectly understood the meaning of this enigmatical expression, and the importance of

of a cautious and judicious procedure on an occasion so critical, returned instantly to Limerick, and there held a secret consultation with a few selected friends^r. It was readily agreed that the death of the chief governour, at a time when the next man in command was summoned into England, required an immediate attention to the peace and security of the English province ; and that no troops could be spared from this first and necessary service. It had cost Raymond much pains and labour to gain the city of Limerick, and it was now peculiarly mortifying to find himself obliged to abandon this hardly acquired conquest. But the garrison could by no means be left behind. He therefore sent for Donald O'Brien ; and with an affected ease and confidence acquainted him, that by his late submission he was become one of the king's barons, and entitled to the confidence of his liege lord ; and therefore, as a mark of distinction due to his exalted rank, he entrusted him with the custody of Limerick, which might give him an occasion of approving his attachment, and meriting additional honours and rewards. The Irish chieftain received this proposal with a secret exultation, concealed under the appearance of the most profound humility, and dutiful allegiance. He was solemnly sworn, with the most horrid dissimulation, to take custody of Limerick for the king of England, and to restore it peaceably at the royal will and pleasure. Raymond and his troops proceeded to evacuate the town ; but scarcely had they passed over one end of the bridge, when the other was broken down ; and they had the mortification to behold the city, which they had taken such pains to fortify, and supply with stores of every kind,

set on fire in four different quarters by order of O'Brien, who declared that Limerick should no longer be the nest of foreigners. We are told that when this transaction was reported to king Henry, possibly in order to possess him with an unfavourable opinion of Raymond; this prince too generous and too wise to judge by the event, observed, that the first gaining of Limerick was a noble exploit, the recovery of it still nobler; but that the only act of wisdom was the abandoning their conquest in this manner.

THE obsequies of earl Strongbow^c, which had been deferred 'till the arrival of Raymond, were performed under the direction of this lord and archbishop Lawrence, with all due solemnity and magnificence. The ignorance and superstition of the Irish clergy, which infect those lax and imperfect records they have left behind them, impute the death of this earl to the divine vengeance judiciously inflicted on his enormities, and especially those devastations which he had committed in their churches^v. Since the days of Turgesius, the savage Dane, Ireland, say they, never knew so cruel and unrelenting an oppressor. Remorse and horror attended his dissolution; and in the awful moment of his departure, he confessed that he had been smitten by the saints of Ireland. Such invectives are naturally to be expected, when in support of what he deemed his rightful inheritance, and the interests of his master, policy, or what is called by that name, obliged him to a severe and rigorous exertion of his power over those, whose hatred of their invaders was frequently savage and perfidious. It is equally natural to expect that the

English

English writers should be more favourable to the character of this earl. We have a particular, and no unpleasing description of him by Giraldus. Earl Strongbow, saith the historian, was of a complexion somewhat sanguine and spotted; his eyes grey, his countenance feminine, his voice small, his neck slender, but in most other particulars he was well formed, and tall; liberal and courteous in his manners; and what he could not gain by power, he frequently obtained by an insinuating address. In peace he was more disposed to obey than to govern. His state and authority were reserved for the camp, and here supported with the utmost dignity. He was diffident of his own judgment, cautious of proposing his own plans of operation; but in executing those of others, undaunted and vigorous. In battle, he was the standard on which his soldiers fixed their eyes; and by whose motions they were determined either to advance or to retreat. His temper was composed and uniform; not dejected by misfortune, nor elated by success.

By the death of this earl, the English council at Dublin were to exercise an important power vested in them by Henry, that of electing a chief governour, till the king's pleasure should be known. Every circumstance determined them to confer this office upon Raymond, the favourite of the army, and the terror of the Irish enemies. The king's commissioners readily concurred in this choice, and embarked in full persuasion that they had provided most effectually for the interests of their royal master, by leaving them to the conduct and direction of this lord.

BUT the jealousies of Henry were by no means allayed by the most favourable representations which these commissioners could make of Raymond and his conduct^r. He therefore determined to entrust the government of Ireland to William Fitz-Andelm a nobleman allied to him by * blood, and of approved allegiance. He sent him into Ireland with a train of twenty knights ; and at the same time † John de Courcey, Robert Fitz-Stephen, and Milo de Cogan, were appointed to attend the new governour, with a train of ten knights to each. With these embarked Vivian, the pope's legate, and Nicholas Wallingford, an English ecclesiastic, with the brief of pope Alexander, lately granted to king Henry, in confirmation of his title to the dominion of Ireland. Fitz-Andelm and his attendants

^r Girald.

* Arlotta, mother of the Conqueror, was married to Harlowen de Burgo, by whom she had Robert earl of Cornwal, whose two sons were Andelm and John. Andelm had issue this William Fitz-Andelm ; John was the father of Hubert de Burgo, chief justiciary of England. Cox.

† Giraldus asserts that Courcey was joined in commission with Fitz-Andelm. But that this is a mistake of the historian (worthy to be noted, only to shew that he is not to be implicitly relied on) appears from the commission itself, which is still extant, and of which the following is a copy from an old parchment roll in possession of the earl of Meath.

“ Henricus, Dei gratia, rex Angliæ, dominus Hiberniæ, dux Normanniæ & Aquitaniæ, & comes Andegaviæ, archiepiscopis, episcopis, regibus, comitibus, baronibus, et omnibus fidelibus suis Hiberniæ, salutem. Sciatis me Dei gratia sanum esse & incolumem, & hegolia mea bene & honorifice procedere. Ego vero quam cito potero vacabo magnis negotiis meis Hiberniæ. Nunc autem ad vos mitto Willielmum filium Andelmi dapiferum meum, cui commisi negotia mea tractanda & agenda mei loco & vice. Quare vobis mando & firmiter præcipio quod ei sicut mihi met attendatis de agendis meis, & faciatis quicquid vobis ipse dixerit ex parte mea, sicut amorem meum habere desideratis, & per fidem quam mihi debetis. Ego quoque ratum habeo & firmum quicquid ipse fecerit tanquam egomet fecissem, & quicquid vos feceritis erga eum, stabile habeo. Testibus Galfrido archidiacono Cantuariæ & Ricardo archidiacono Pictaviæ & Ricardo constabulario. Apud Valonias.”

dants landed at Wexford, where Raymond was at hand to receive him with the reverence due to his commission. He resigned his state to the new governor, together with the towns, hostages, and other trusts which he held for the king by virtue of his temporary commission; and thus having assumed the reins of government, Fitz-Andelm began his administration by a stately progress along the coast, in order to inspect the forts and cities immediately vested in the king; while the ecclesiastics were on their part active in the service of their master^r. An assembly of the Irish clergy was convened at Waterford, in which the brief lately granted by Alexander, and the bull of Adrian, were solemnly promulged, and the king's title to the sovereign dominion of Ireland asserted and declared in form, with dreadful denunciations of the severest censures of the church^a, against all those who should impeach the grant made by the holy see, or resist the sovereign authority of Henry, thus constituted rightful lord of Ireland.

BUT, whatever might have been the influence of such denunciations, a vigorous and resolute commander was still necessary to defend the interests of the English monarch against a turbulent and incensed enemy. The territory of Meath had but just now been the scene of desperate hostilities. Richard Flemming, an Englishman, who commanded the castle of Slany^x, wantonly presuming on his strength had provoked the neighbouring chiefs by his depredations, who in revenge fell suddenly upon him with their united forces, slaughtered his followers without mercy or distinction; and pursuing the remains of his garrison even to the very walls of Dublin,

Dublin, were left at full liberty to demolish every fort which the English had erected in their territory. But, far from repressing or revenging such incursions, Fitz-Andelm seems to have had neither dispositions nor abilities suited to a government, which was to be supported by a vigilant and a martial spirit. He came into the island with a jealousy of the original adventurers, which possibly had been infused into him by Henry, and which he had not temper to conceal. At his first interview with Raymond^p, he is said to have looked with a malignant eye upon the numbers and gallant appearance of his train; and, turning to his followers, was weak enough to threaten that he should soon find means to quell their pride. If we are to believe Giraldus, he was sensual and corrupt in his manners, and of consequence rapacious. The object of his administration was to enrich himself, not by the force and terror of his arms, but by the less hazardous and baser means of craft, fraud, and circumvention. To preserve peace with the Irish chiefs, he had recourse to affected courtesy and flattery, which they had discernment enough to discover and to despise, and to his own countrymen, the apparent insincerity of his fairest professions, and the designs he manifested against their interest and properties, rendered him an object of detestation.

THE death of Maurice, head of the family of Geraldines, which derived weight and respect from the dignity of his character, encouraged and enabled the chief governour to discover his designs against the first adventurers^r. He had the address to prevail upon the sons of Maurice to exchange
their

^p Girald.

^r Ibid.

their peaceable station in the fort of Wicklow for the castle of Ferns, where they were more exposed to the incursions of the natives. Raymond le Gros, and Robert Fitz-Stephen, were also seduced by artifice, or compelled by violence, to resign their settlements granted by the king, for others, by their situation, more liable to invasion. Walter Almain, his kinsman and creature, was stationed in Wexford, where he endeavoured to provide for his security by forming a connexion with the Irish chieftain of O'Kenselagh^c, who is said to have prevailed on him by the force of bribes to demolish some considerable works lately erected, for the defence of the English plantation. Thus, while all advantages were engrossed by the governour and his dependents, the perilous and laborious duties of defence were imposed on the original adventurers, a hardy race, untainted with the luxuries and debaucheries of Fitz-Andelm and his Normans; but proud and irritable, and justly impatient to see the fruits of their labours seized by these new settlers. The strong, and probably aggravated representations of their historian and panegyrist Giraldus, plainly mark their discontent and indignation; and this unhappy division of the English, with the mutual jealousies and animosities of contending parties, could not fail to cast a shade of dishonour and reproach on the administration of Fitz-Andelm. The lords avowed their hatred; the soldiers were unpaid, and ill appointed; of consequence mutinous and discontented. The Irish natives crowded eagerly to a court which received them with the most flattering attention, and which is said not to have been inaccessible to bribes^d. Their claims and complaints were heard with

favour

favour by the chief governour, and always decided against his rivals, which served to encrease their confidence, without lessening their disaffection.

THE English lords had all left their native lands, from the hopes of valuable settlements and acquisitions in Ireland ; and they, who had not as yet received their rewards, were particularly displeased with Fitz-Andelm, and impatient of an administration unfriendly to the spirit of adventurers. John de Courcey was the first to express his dissatisfaction. An extraordinary strength of body, and vigour of constitution, together with a violent and precipitate valour, had rendered him the admiration of his warlike and unpolished countrymen. His own utter insensibility to danger made him the readier to propose the most hazardous and desperate enterprises ; and his manners, which were rather those of a common soldier than a commander, gave him the easier access to the passions and prejudices of the soldiery. He laboured to enflame them against the governour ; he represented the distress to which they were exposed by his avarice, which deprived them of pay, and the timidity of his government, which precluded them from supplying their necessities at the expence of their enemies ; reminded them that king Henry had formerly granted him such lands of Ulster as he should acquire by the sword ; and freely promised to share his fortune with those who preferred a gallant enterprise to a state of distressful indolence ; and thus prevailed on a * small body of the boldest and most adventurous
to

s Girald.

* Giraldus reckons up no more than twenty-two knights, and three hundred common soldiers. But his numbers were afterward rated much higher.

to attend him into the northern parts of Ireland, where the English arms had not as yet penetrated.

ARMORIC of St. Laurence^r, a valiant knight, with whom he had been connected in the strictest bands of friendship, determined, on this occasion, to share the fortune of his old associate. Robert de la Poer, a young soldier, who had lately been distinguished in the wars of Leinster, took the same part; and such leaders gave both strength and credit to the enterprize. The marriage of de Courcay, with the daughter of Gothred, king of Mann, freed him from the apprehensions of any opposition from this quarter, where the Irish had often found an effectual resource; and his own ignorant superstition served to confirm his hopes of a permanent and extensive conquest^e. He had discovered in the prophecies of Merlin, that the acquisition of Ulster was reserved for his valour; and his Irish adherents supplied him with another prophet, who declared that Down (the immediate object of his enterprize) was to be subdued by a stranger mounted on a white horse, with a shield charged with painted birds. He accoutered himself according to this description, and marched to take possession of his destined conquest.

ON the fourth day of his march he arrived at Down, the seat of Dunleve, prince of Uladh, who, unprovided for defence against an invasion so unexpected, fled precipitately at the first appearance of hostilities. His people, thus exposed to the ravages of an indigent and rapacious enemy, were reduced to a state of helpless consternation, at the havoc of invaders whom they had not provoked,
and

and from whom they thought themselves secured by solemn treaty. In this distress their prince had recourse to the interposition of Vivian, the legate, who, in his progress through the island, now chanced to reside at Down, and was witness of the present devastation. He instantly addressed himself to de Courcey, represented the injustice and cruelty of his present enterprize, reminded him of the treaty which the king of England had but just now concluded with the whole body of the Irish, in the person of their monarch, declared that the men of Ulster were ready to pay their quota of the stipulated tribute, and entreated him to spare a people who had provoked no resentment, and who, instead of being the object of hostilities, had a fair claim to protection.

WHATEVER deference de Courcey might affect for the person and character of Vivian, it plainly appeared that he paid no attention to his remonstrances; for his hostilities were continued^r. He fortified himself in Down, and seemed determined to maintain the possession he had acquired. The legate is said to have been so provoked at this injustice, and so affected by the sufferings of an unoffending people, that although the chief part of his commission was to prevail on the Irish to acknowledge the supremacy of king Henry, yet he now boldly advised Dunleve to have recourse to arms, and to exert himself as became a brave prince, in order to rescue his territories from these rapacious invaders. His forces were collected; the neighbouring chiefs invited to his assistance; even Roderic was called upon to rise up against this outrageous violation of faith; and the cause

was

was too important to be entirely neglected, even amidst all those private quarrels which still continued to weaken and distract the Irish princes^a. A tumultuary army, said to consist of ten thousand men, was collected, and marched under the command of the prince of Uladh, to dispossess these foreigners^r. De Courcay wisely determining not to abide a siege in a city scantily provided, and hastily fortified, marched out to meet the enemy with an affected contempt of their superiority ; at the same time chusing such a situation as might render their numbers less effectual^p. The charge was furious, and the battle maintained for a considerable time with equal bravery on both sides ; till, at length, a disciplined, well-armed, and well-conducted body, proved superior to irregular, ill-appointed, and undirected numbers. De Courcay, by the total overthrow of his opponents, was for the present left at full liberty to parcel out his lands, project and build his forts, and make all necessary provisions for the security of his conquest.

IN the summer of the same year, however, the contest was renewed by a formidable army of the confederated Irish ; but with the same successⁿ. No less than fifteen thousand men are said to have advanced to the walls of Down, and to have been defeated by de Courcay, with the loss of several of their bravest chieftains.

YET neither their hatred of these invaders, nor their hopes of exterminating them, had as yet subsided ; though some of the neighbouring Irish lords seemed to court the fortune of de Courcay, and gave him flattering assurances of attachment,
Of

Of these, one named Mac Mahon had so effectually recommended himself to the English commander, and had bound himself so solemnly to his interests by the sacred Irish band of Gofshipred, that he was admitted into his councils, and entrusted with two forts lately erected, together with their adjoining domain. The Irishman soon levelled these forts to the ground; and, when questioned for this sudden breach of faith, answered, with a fullen insolence, that “he had
 “not engaged to keep stone walls, and that he
 “scorned to confine himself within such cold and
 “dreary enclosures, while his own native woods
 “lay so convenient for his reception.” This naturally produced an invasion of his territory, the usual punishment of treachery or revolt; and here de Courcey executed his revenge without controul, and prepared to return with a numerous prey of cattle, the ordinary riches of the island. Three large herds, each attended by a distinct body of the English forces, formed a line of three miles, through a deep and narrow road, which lay through thick woods, where an Irish army, said to consist of no less than eleven thousand, waited in ambush; and rushing suddenly from their concealment, fell on each division in the same moment, and cast the whole English army, thus encumbered by their booty, into the utmost confusion. At once assailed vigourously by the enemy, and trodden down by the cattle, their total destruction seemed inevitable; nor could the utmost exertion of their leaders secure a retreat, without considerable loss. With the remains of this shattered army, de Courcey was now to force his way through a country possessed by victorious enemies, who harrassed him without respite

respite. He repeatedly obliged them to retire with the loss of some noted chief. Mac Mahon himself fell in the last attack ; and de Courcey had the good fortune to gain one of his own forts, well entrenched and garrisoned ; while the enemy, still resolved to pursue their advantage, encamped at the distance of half a mile from his entrenchment. At midnight, Armoric of Saint Laurence, ventured out to view the posture of the enemy, whom he found, as he suspected, in a state of careless security. He represented to de Courcey, that instead of waiting to be surrounded by the Irish, who would certainly renew the assault on the next morning, and could not fail to reduce his inconsiderable body, either by force or famine, he should now seize the critical opportunity of attacking them in their camp, with all the advantage which their confidence and total want of discipline afforded. The scheme was instantly adopted, and executed with full success. The Irish were surprized, and slaughtered without resistance. Scarcely two hundred of their body is said to have escaped the carnage, while two only of their assailants were lost in the tumult of the night.

WHILE John de Courcey was engaged in Ulster, the spirit of enterprize seized others of the English leaders, who despising the government of Fitz-Andelm, and pressed by their own distresses, grew impatient to adventure into those parts of Ireland which had not yet experienced their invasions. The ambition and turbulence of Murrough, son of Roderic O'Connor^y, had involved his family and province in considerable disorder. In revenge, of some supposed injury, or to favour some factious purpose, he

he seized the opportunity of his father's absence in a remote part of his territory, and invited Milo de Cogan to march into Connaught, with an assurance of great advantages from such an expedition. The invitation was readily obeyed; and Milo, full of hopes, instantly collected from Dublin, and the adjacent district, a body of forty knights, two hundred horse, and three hundred archers, and advanced without molestation to Roscommon. Here he was joined by Murrough, his new ally, who engaged to conduct him through the province. Some plausible pretext seems to have been alledged by Milo for this incursion (possibly that of reducing some refractory lords, who refused to pay tribute to the English government) for he dispatched a messenger to Roderic, notifying his arrival, and summoning him, upon his allegiance, to join the English forces. The summons, however, was neglected; and as it was well known that the English adventurers sought to enrich themselves by plunder, the inhabitants, on the first notice of their approach, drove away their cattle, secreted their valuable effects, and reduced the whole country to a desert.

THE monkish annalists of Ireland make the most affecting complaints of the destruction of churches by the English in all their expeditions. They seem willing to represent them as a race of savage barbarians, who spared nothing sacred or venerable, and were even possessed with an heathenish aversion to all religious houses. But the truth is, that in Ireland (every part of which had been a scene of constant hostilities) it had long been a custom for the inhabitants to deposite provisions, and

and effects of greater value, in the churches^r, where they lay secure, amidst all their domestic quarrels, as in a kind of sanctuary, which it was deemed the utmost impiety to violate. But the English had no such superstitious scruples; and their necessities were generally too pressing not to seek provisions wherever they might be found. The churches they considered as their sure resource; and opposition sometimes occasioned havock and devastation far beyond their intention. To remedy this inconvenience, Vivian, the legate, procured an ordinance in a synod held in Dublin, that the English, when engaged in any expedition, should have liberty to take provisions deposited in the churches, provided they paid their just value.

BUT, in the present incursion into Connaught, the Irish themselves, to deprive their invaders of this resource, burnt down their own churches^r (as their annals expressed it) *in spite to the foreigners*; who, in the vexation of disappointment, could only commit some useless ravages. Reduced to the utmost distress for subsistence in an enemy's country, left by Roderic to encounter all the consequences of their precipitation, and threatened with a formidable attack from the united forces of Connaught and Munster, they had no measure to pursue, but that of a mortifying and disgraceful retreat. In this they were obliged to sustain the repeated assaults of the Connacians; but at length regained their quarters at Dublin, though not without considerable loss, leaving their ally Murrough, to the resentment of his countrymen, who sentenced him, with the concurrence of his own father, to have his eyes put out for his practices with the English, and his encouragement of their invasion.

THE imperfect and jejune accounts which remain of the local dissensions and provincial contests in Ireland, at this period, give a shocking idea of the state of this unhappy country". Desmond and Thomond in the southern province were distracted by the jealousies of contending chiefs, and the whole land wasted by unnatural and bloody quarrels. Treachery and murder were revenged by treachery and murder, so as to perpetuate a succession of outrages the most horrid and disgraceful to humanity. The northern province was a scene of like enormities, though the new English settlers, who were considered as a common enemy, should have forced the natives to mutual union. A young prince of the Hi-Nial race, and heir-apparent to the rights of that family, fell by the hand of a rival lord; this rival was killed in revenge; the partizans on each side, as the several powers prevailed, were butchered with every circumstance of triumphant barbarity. In Connaught, the blinded son of Roderic was rescued from prison by his partizans, and the flame of dissention re-kindled. Nor were the Irish toparchs in Leinster more peaceable, or less barbarous in their contests. All were equally strangers to the nobler virtues of humanity. Nor was religion, in the form it then assumed, calculated or applied to restrain their violences, or to subdue their brutal passions. An effectual conquest, and general subjection of the whole Island to one reasonable and equitable government, must have proved a singular blessing to these unhappy people. But Providence was pleased to ordain, that their enormities should continue much longer to prove their own severe punishment.

C H A P. V.

Acts of Fitz-Andelm's government.—He is recalled.—Character of Hugh de Lacy his successor.—John constituted lord of Ireland.—Grants by king Henry in Thomond, Desmond, and Connaught—explain the nature of his cession to prince John.—Milo de Cogan, and Robert Fitz-Stephen, settle in Desmond.—Philip de Braosa alarmed.—Resigns his grants.—Conduct of Hugh de Lacy.—He is recalled to England.—Restored to his government.—His excellent administration.—John de Courcey engaged in Ulster.—Defeated—yet maintains his settlements.—Miserable situation of Connaught.—Death and character of Lawrence O'Toole.—His successor.—Massacre of Milo de Cogan and Ralph Fitz-Stephen.—Robert Fitz-Stephen relieved by Raymond le Gros.—Melancholy situation of Robert.—Arrival of Cambrensis and John Comyn in Ireland.—Altercations of the English clergy with the Irish ecclesiastics.—Lacy again recalled.—Conduct of Philip de Braosa.—Earl John knighted.—The pope offers to crown him king in Ireland.—Henry declines the offer.—Sends John to the government of Ireland with a splendid train.—His attendants.—His arrival.—Insolence of his courtiers to the Irish lords.—A general spirit of insurrection raised through Ireland.—Enflamed by the attendants of prince John.—He builds some forts.—Insurrection of the Irish natives—Several of his barons surprized and slain.—Behaviour of his courtiers.—Distressful state of the country—and of John and his court.—John is recalled.—Assassination of Hugh de Lacy.—John de Courcey appointed deputy.—His atti-

vity and valour.—State of Ulster—and of Connaught.—Expedition of de Courcey into Connaught.—His retreat.—He suppresses the commotions in Ulster and Argial.—Fatal effects of rebellion in the family of Roderic O'Connor.—Death of Henry the second.—Acts of power exercised in Ireland by earl John during the reign of Richard.—Hugh de Lacy the younger appointed his deputy.—De Courcey discontented.—Insurrection of the Irish.—Cathal, the Bloody-handed, gains the kingdom of Connaught.—Is joined by the princes of Thomond and Desmond.—Intercepts Armoric of St. Laurence, and his party.—A desperate engagement.—Armoric and his men killed.—Cathal elated.—Burning of Dublin, and disorders of the neighbouring country.—Earl Marshal appointed to succeed de Lacy.—English defeated by Daniel O'Brien.—Death of Daniel—and cruelties exercised on his family.—Cathal marches into Munster.—English driven out of Limerick.—Cork threatened with a siege.—Surrendered to Mac Artby.—Hamo de Valois appointed deputy in the place of Earl Marshal.—His quarrel with the archbishop of Dublin.—Death of Roderic O'Connor.—Death of Richard the first—and accession of king John.

THE complaints occasioned by an indolent and corrupt administration were too violent to be long concealed from the English monarch, and determined him to remove Fitz-Andelm from the government of Ireland^a. Both Giraldus and the Irish monks speak of this governor and his conduct with the utmost disrespect^c. They agree that his administration was distinguished by one act only of a commendable nature; and this was nothing

^a Girald Camb.

^c Ann. of Mary's Abby MSS.

nothing more important, than the removal of what they call the Staff of Jesus; a relique on which the superstition of the time had stamped an inestimable value, from the cathedral of Armagh to that of Dublin. The peculiar merit of committing this precious deposit to the care of the clergy of Dublin rather than those of Armagh, is not distinctly explained. Possibly, as Ulster was now a seat of war, it was deemed a place not of sufficient security for so valuable a treasure. However this may be, these clerical historians seem to do injustice to the merit of Fitz-Andelm, by passing over in silence another instance of his pious attention to the church, that of founding and endowing the monastery of St. Thomas the Martyr, in the western suburbs of Dublin, still known by the name of Donore*. The late prelate of Canterbury having just

* The curious reader is here represented with the charter of the foundation, together with that of Henry, in confirmation of the grant of his deputy.

E Rotulo antiquo penes Comitem Midie.

“Wilhelmus filius Andelmi, domini regis Dapifer, universis Christi fidelibus, salutem. Sciatis me in presentia Viviani cardinalis, & Laurentii archiepiscopi Dublin, & plurimorum episcoporum Hibernie, dedisse & obtulisse Deo & ecclesie beati Thomae Martyris Christi unam carucatum terrae, quae vocatur Dononer, cum molendino & prato, & omnibus pertinentiis ejusdem terrae, tam in bosco quam in plano, pro anima Galfridi comitis Andegaviae, patris Henrici regis & matris ejus imperatricis, & antecessorum ejus, & pro ipso rege Henrico & filiis ejus, in perpetuam & puram Eleemosynam. Quare volo, & ex parte domini regis precipio, ut quicumque in honorem Dei et beati Thomae Martyris Christi & voluntate domini regis Angliae custos fuerit, omne praedictum tenementum teneat adeo libere, & quiete, & honorifice, & pure, & integre, sicut aliqua ecclesia aliquod tenementum liberius tenet, infra Angliam vel infra Hiberniam. Teste Eugenio Midie episcopo, Neemia episcopo de Kildare, Augustino Waterfordiensi episcopo, Milone de Cogan, Galfrido de Constantin, Waltero de Riddlesford, Roberto de Bermingham, Reymundo filio Wilhelmi, Meilero filio Henrici, Philippo le Poher, Roberto de sancto Michael, Johanne de Clahull, Gilberto de la Warre, Thoma la Matre Andalain, Rogero fratre Hayme, Ricardo de Dere, Wilhelmo Bermingham.”

Ex eodem rotulo.

just now received his high titles of saint and martyr from Rome, was become the fashionable object of devotion; and Henry himself, with an affected reverence to his memory, instantly confirmed the endowment of Fitz-Andelm by his own royal charter.

BUT the present situation of affairs in Ireland required a chief governour, whose attention should not be confined to the care of reliques, or the founding of monasteries. Hugh de Lacy was therefore appointed to this station, for which he had already approved himself eminently qualified. A man well acquainted with the circumstances of the country in which he was to preside, the characters of those he was to govern, the grievances he was to redress, and the regularities he was to correct; vigorous in establishing and extending the English interest, wisely providing for the security of the new settlers by multiplying forts, and strengthening every part of the English territory against the turbulence and jealousies of the Irish; at the same time restoring those of both nations, who had been unjustly driven from their lands, and acting equally to all, upon the principles of a just and generous-spirited administration.

AT

“Henricus, Dei gratia, rex Angliæ, dux Normandiæ et Aquitaniæ et comes Andegaviæ, episcopis, abbatibus, justiciariis, vicecomitibus, ministris & omnibus fidelibus suis, Francis, & Anglis, & Hibernensibus, salutem. Sciatis me concessisse & dedisse, & præsentī charta confirmasse Deo & ecclesiæ beati Thomæ Martyris unam carucatam terræ de Donouer quam Wilhelmus filius Andelmi Dapiter meus, ex parte mea dedit eidem ecclesiæ, quam idem Wilhelmus fundari fecit extra portam occidentalem apud Dublin, pro salute mea & ipsius & antecessorum & successorum meorum. Quare volo & firmiter præcipio quod eadem ecclesia ipsam carucatam terræ habeat & teneat in liberam & perpetuam Eleemosynam, bene, & in pace, & integre, cum omnibus pertinentiis & libertatibus & liberis consuetudinibus. Testibus ipso Wilhelmo filio Andelmi, Reginaldo de Curceny, Hugone de Lascy, Thoma Basset, Roberto de Poher. Apud Oxenford.”

AT the same time that the government of Ireland was assigned to Lacy, the king found himself at leisure to make several regulations relative to this kingdom, and for this purpose he summoned the principal adventurers to attend him in England^r. What was of most consequence, he is said to have made a formal and solemn appointment of his son John to the lordship of Ireland; an appointment which has been the subject of much discussion; writers of different parties and opinions wresting it to their several purposes, and representing it as might best suit their speculations. As Hoveden expresses it, Henry came to Oxford; and, in a general council held there, constituted his son John king in Ireland^a; a title which he never assumed. But however confidently it may be asserted that he used the style of lord of Ireland in consequence of being possessed of the crown of England^c, nothing is more certain, than that, during the life-time both of his father and of his brother, John constantly and invariably used this style in all his public acts, by virtue of the present grant. But although the grant was made in what the historian calls, "*concilium generale*," this affords neither proof nor presumption that it was made by authority of parliament. The grant to John appears to have been the free grace of his father, without any solicitation of concurrence or assent; declared in a public assembly, possibly for the greater notoriety and solemnity. The transaction (as the abbot of Peterborough expresses it) was "*coram episcopis & principibus terræ*." And among these, several lay lords and bishops of Ireland were assessors, if we may believe the Irish annalists.

HENRY

^r Hoveden.^a Coke.^c Chart. var.

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HENRY at the same time granted to Milo de Cogan and Robert Fitz-Stephen^r, as a reward of their faithful services, the kingdom of Cork as it is called; from the river of Lismore to the sea, to be held by the service of sixty knights *of him*, and *of his son* John, and *their* heirs, with an exception of the city of Cork, and an adjacent district, which the king reserved to *himself* and *his heirs*. To Herebert Fitz-Herebert he granted the kingdom of Limerick by the like tenure, and with the like reservation of the city of Limerick and its district; to William Fitz-Andelme the greatest part of Connaught; to Robert de la Poer the territory of Waterford, with a reservation of the city and the cantred of the Ostmen, renewing also his former grant to Hugh de Lacy of all Meath, which he was now to hold *of the king and of his son John*, by the service of one hundred knights.

By these grants it appears that Henry^r conferred something more upon his son than a mere title of honour, or temporary authority; something permanent and hereditary. At the same time they afford an indisputable proof that it was by no means his intention to resign the entire sovereignty of Ireland, or to transfer the rights he had there acquired, fully and absolutely to his son. His Irish subjects were to hold not of John only as their sole rightful liege lord, but of the king and of his son as a subordinate power; and most of the lands and cities which in the late treaty with Roderic had been exempted from the jurisdiction of the Irish king, were now, by a like reservation, to continue as the immediate demesnes of Henry, independent of that delegated authority which was to be

be established in the other parts of the island. These grants then afford a proof that it was the intention of this prince that the heir to the crown of England should ever enjoy the sovereignty he had acquired in Ireland. But this was an appointment which did not derive its validity from any ordinance or act of legislature. Had it been thus formally declared and established, there would not have been that danger of its been forgotten, altered, or subverted, which Giraldus expresses in the reign of John, nor any occasion for preserving a memorial of it by an annual tribute^a, which he recommends to be carefully exacted for this purpose.

JOHN and his heirs, it should seem, were by the present grant to stand in the place of Roderic, whose rights Henry appears by no means solicitous to preserve, notwithstanding the formality of his stipulations. He had good reason to conclude that all such rights or pretensions must gradually become obsolete, as the English settlements should be extended through the island; and that John would thus become, in effect, at least, what Roderic was styled in the late treaty, "*Rex sub eo, & paratus ad servitium suum.*" Time and vicissitudes then unforeseen, have reduced such discussions as the present to points of mere historical curiosity. They, who are disposed to give them greater consequence, will possibly find the idea of this transaction, as here stated, sufficiently supported in the progress of this history.

It is not clear by what right Henry now disposed of the southern province, and other parts of Ireland, or how these late grants were reconcileable to

^a Girald. Epist. Ded. c.

to the treaty he had concluded with Roderic. The old historians speak of them with the same ease and indifference with which they were made, and with as little solicitude to preserve the least appearance of equity and good faith. But if Henry thought it beneath him to adhere to his stipulations, the Irish chiefs of Thomond and Desmond were, on their parts, very reluctant to yield up their territories at his demand, though weakened by their mutual quarrels, and little able to rise up against an English government, which now promised vigour and abilities^r. As Fitz-Herebert had resigned the grant made to him of the principality of Limerick, where the Irish were supposed to be most hostile, it was given to Philip de Braosa, a man not much more disposed to adventure, but who was persuaded to court his fortune in Ireland; and collecting a considerable body of Welshmen, desperate in their fortunes, and profligate in their manners, (so they are described) he embarked with de Lacy and the other lords^a; attended Cogan and Fitz-Stephen into the southern parts of Ireland; and as the city of Cork was now possessed by an English garrison commanded by an English governor, the new claimants here found a kind and hospitable reception. But when they came to produce their charters of donation, and to demand their lands, those Irish chiefs, who had not yet forfeited their rights by any act of avowed rebellion against the power of Henry, remonstrated boldly against this intrusion, and insisted on retaining their native possessions. As there was not on either side sufficient strength or confidence to rely upon the decision of the sword, some inconsiderable hostilities were succeeded by a treaty, in which both parties

were

were obliged to recede from their original demands. The Irish chiefs on their part allowed Cogan and Fitz-Stephen a settlement in their country, yielded to them seven cantreds of land (as they were called) contiguous to the city; and on this condition were allowed to reserve the remaining territory, consisting of twenty-four cantreds, to themselves^r. And thus having accommodated their differences with an appearance of mutual amity, Cogan and Fitz-Stephen led Braosa and his train to take possession of their portion. They marched towards the city of Limerick in military array, and with an appearance sufficiently respectable. But this city was possessed by enemies the most inveterate and determined. It was instantly set on fire at the first approach of the English. Braosa was shocked and confounded. His followers, however eager to enrich themselves, were too dissolute and too devoid of all sense of military glory to encounter danger with steadiness and perseverance. No persuasion could prevail upon them to attack an enemy who had given such proofs of savage violence. They retired with horror, and sought their security among their countrymen in the city of Cork.

IN the mean time, Hugh de Lacy proceeded to the administration of his government with abilities and vigour. On his arrival at Dublin, he seems to have found the garrison considerably distressed for provisions, which it was his first care to supply^s. He made an incursion into Connaught, say the Irish annalists, in order to destroy the churches of Clon-naemoise; which sufficiently marks the purpose of his expedition to have been nothing else but to possess

self of the stores deposited in these churches and which he had now the sanction of ecclesiastical authority to take for their just valueⁿ. He retired, say the same annalists, for fear of the Irish chiefs. More probably he had proceeded without any hostile intentions, and returned, because he had obtained his object. The Irish, no less than his own countrymen, had reason to be satisfied with his conduct; for his influence, so far as it extended, was employed in protecting them from opposition^c, softening their aversion to the new settlers, reconciling them to civility, and teaching them the arts of peace. At the same time he was no less careful to guard against the insidious and turbulent spirit of these natives, which injustice and oppression had indeed frequently provoked, and which had frequently broken forth with a dangerous and destructive violence. He stationed some of the bravest of the original adventurers where they might be most serviceable in guarding against incursions. He was indefatigable in raising his forts in every part of Leinster, as he had formerly in Meath; and these were entrusted to English lords of assured courage and fidelity. He administered justice with lenity and impartiality; and is said to have set the example of a politic coalition between the natives of each kingdom, by marrying the daughter of Roderic O'Connor.

BUT the popularity naturally arising from the genius and spirit of his administration served to expose him to envy and malignity. Doubts and suspicions were suggested to Henry, and but too favourably received^r. His jealousy of a powerful subject, which had operated peculiarly in the case of

ⁿ Ibid.^c Hanmer. Girald.^r Benedict Abb. Neub.

of all the great adventurers in Ireland, disposed him to apprehend that Lacy, invested as he was with so extensive a domain, and such important powers, might shake off his allegiance, and erect himself into an independent sovereign. This lord was suddenly and unexpectedly recalled to England; and John, Constable of Cheshire, and baron of Halton castle, and Richard de Peach, bishop of Coventry, were appointed to the government of Ireland, strangers to the country, and little qualified for this important trust. Such mistaken conduct might have proved as prejudicial to the interests of Henry, as it was dishonourable to his policy, had not the error been corrected within the short space of three months. The readiness with which Lacy resigned his state, and appeared before his royal master, the candid explanation of his conduct, and the conviction which it afforded of his zeal and loyalty, dissipated the suspicions of Henry in a moment; and Lacy was again remanded to his government. Robert of Shrewsbury, a domestic chaplain, in whom the king placed peculiar confidence, attended him as a coadjutor, or rather an inspector of his actions; which Lacy himself is said to have requested, that the king might be thus authentically informed of all his conduct, and his interests carried on, without any interruptions from ignorant or factious rumour.

IN resuming his government, Lacy pursued the same measures which had hitherto been attended with such good effects; and while he was busily employed in strengthening and settling the province of Leinster, John de Courcey with equal diligence continued to extend and to secure his settlements in

in the northern province, notwithstanding the vigorous and obstinate resistance of the natives. They had taken every occasion to harass and distress him with the implacable resentment of men impatient of his usurpation, and determined in their revenge. They had repeatedly attacked, and claimed the honour of defeating him^a. Near the town of Newry in particular, a chieftain of Argial had provoked his resentment, by destroying one of his ships, which had returned from England laden with stores and provisions, and massacring the whole crew. John instantly collected a thousand men, and marched against the assassin; but soon learned that this scheme of outrage and cruelty was but a feint to draw him from his fastness, and that the northern chiefs lay ready to receive him at Dundalk, with an army of seven thousand men. A council was held in this dangerous emergency; and by the advice of Armoric of St. Laurence (for Courcey himself seems to have had more valour than address) a friar was employed to assure the Irish leaders that a reinforcement had lately been received from England, which rendered the numbers of their enemy highly formidable. To aid this deception, the English forces were so disposed as to make the best and most alarming appearance in their march, and advanced with every mark of confidence and security. The Irish were thus effectually deceived, and fled with precipitation, till stopped by a deep and rapid river, in which several perished. But as the English pursued their advantage with an inconsiderate violence, they turned, and engaging them in the fury of despair, obliged them to retire with considerable loss; but by their own disorder and confusion were unable to improve their victory.

If

If we are to believe the Irish annalist, de Courcey lost on this occasion four hundred and fifty of his numbers^a; his enemies, but one hundred. Yet neither this, nor another action still more decisive in favour of the Irish, could force him to relinquish his possessions. His progress was retarded; but his settlements were still maintained.

SOME excursions from Thomond threatened to disturb the peace of the English province^x; but were quickly repelled, without any considerable loss. In Desmond the late partition of lands was still maintained, without any apparent discontent. In Connaught, the attention of the Irish chieftains was confined to their own factious quarrels. The sons of Roderic, those implacable disturbers of his government, had given a free course to their brutal ambition, and converted his whole territory into a scene of the most desperate hostilities^y. No less than sixteen young lords, heirs of the ruling families in this province, fell in one battle. We do not learn that the unhappy Roderic ever solicited assistance from the English government; though by his treaty with the king of England, he was to be supported against all his refractory vassals; yet by the punishment inflicted on his son, it seems to have been considered as odious and abhorrent to public virtue, to call in the English at all into the province, or to admit them to any share in their disputes. A contrary conduct must have evidently given occasion to the new settlers to extend their power and dominion. But the quarrels in Connaught, by finding employment for several turbulent Irish lords, and preventing them from making any incursions through the territories of Meath,

^a Ann. Lagen. MS.

^x Ann Anon. MSS.

^y *Ibid.*

Meath, favoured the immediate object of Lacy's government, that of improving and defending the province of Leinster. Here the effects of a wise and strenuous administration became every day more conspicuous, in the peaceable and flourishing situation of the whole country.

THE winter of the year 1181 was distinguished by the death of Laurence O'Toole, the prelate of Dublin^x; a man held in high reverence by his superstitious countrymen, who have been more careful to preserve the legends of his pretended miracles, than the history of his political conduct. And yet we may collect from the short and obscure memorials of this period, that he took no inconsiderable part in those contests which attended the first establishment of the English power in his country. His father, a lord of some distinction in Leinster, had been obliged to deliver him in his early years to king Dermot as an hostage, by whom he was assigned to the custody of the abbot of Glendalagh. Thus habituated to retirement and discipline, he soon acquired a taste for a devotional and monastic course. His monastic virtues recommended him to the high station he enjoyed, in which the nobility of his birth, and sanctity of his manners, engaged the attention and respect of all the higher orders of his countrymen, and necessarily involved him in public affairs. His temperance and purity were softened by an extensive hospitality, that virtue of peculiar praise in an unrefined age and country. His guests, while feasted with the utmost magnificence and liberality, saw the prelate himself adhering to the strictest rules of abstinence and self-denial. The influence which he

he thus acquired, he is said to have employed not only in regulating his church, and governing his clergy by the strictest discipline, but in moderating and composing the dissensions of that rabble of Irish lords, whose barbarous ambition spread anarchy and confusion through their country. His opposition to the English interest was strenuous and determined, so long as opposition could be made with any prospect of success. To Roderic he proved, not only a wise counsellor, but a diligent and active emissary; and his patriotic zeal appears the more amiable, as it was attended with the moderation of his ecclesiastical character, instead of being disgraced by the treachery and cruelty of too many of his countrymen. His love of his own nation was ever predominant, even after he had found it necessary to submit to Henry. Deeply affected with the arbitrary and iniquitous conduct of some English governours, he made a journey to this prince, purposedly, to lay before him the injuries and oppressions which his countrymen sustained. On this occasion we are told, that an extraordinary and whimsical incident had well nigh proved fatal to this prelate. He was officiating in the church of Canterbury, when a man of unsound mind, struck suddenly by the circumstances of the place, the appearance, and the occupation of the archbishop, seized the thought of honouring him with the crown of martyrdom; and for this purpose assaulted him with the utmost violence; nor was Laurence rescued from his attack till he had been desperately wounded in the head. The wretch was seized; and would have suffered capitally for this act of madness, had not the prelate interceded, and prevailed on the king to pardon him. From

England he was summoned to the council of Lateran, in the year 1179, where, by Henry's permission, he attended; and although it be asserted that he was bound by a solemn oath not to attempt any thing on this occasion derogatory to the king's dignity and authority; yet he still thought himself at liberty to display his zeal against the injustice of the English governours in Ireland, and made the most affecting representations in this council of the wrongs and calamities of his countrymen. He is also said to have so far influenced the fathers, that some decrees were made in favour of the Irish nation*. But this zeal was so offensive to Henry, that he sent him a mandate forbidding him to return to his pastoral charge; so that Laurence died an exile in Normandy.

He was succeeded by John Comyn, an Englishman†, whom Henry nominated to the clergy of Dublin, and whose election was ratified by pope Lucius, with a confirmation of the grants made of the rights and possessions of the see‡. The new prelate was chosen by the king as a man addicted to his interests, and who promised vigour and abilities no less in temporal affairs than those of his particular function. Men of abilities, indeed, both in war and politics, were now sought out, and sent to Ireland, to repair the losses lately sustained of some of the bravest and most distinguished of the original adventurers†. Five years had elapsed

* However this may be Laurence was not inattentive to his own interests, and those of his see; for he procured a confirmation from pope Alexander of all his rights and possessions to him and his successors, by a brief dated Later 12° K. Maij Indict. 12° A. D. 1179. Pontif. 20^{mo}. E Libro voc. Crede mihi, fol. 80.

† Girald. Crede mihi.

‡ Dat. Vellitri, Id. Ap. Indict. 15, 1182. Pontif. 1^{mo}. Ibid.

† A. D. 1182. Girald.

sed since Cogan and Fitz-Stephen enjoyed their settlements in Desmond. The latter, though deeply affected by the death of a favourite son, seemed to have the prospect of a peaceable repose provided for his old age. A general intercourse with the Irish natives apparently reconciled him to the new settlers : he lived and consorted with them in the utmost confidence, little suspecting that malignity which lay concealed under the fairest appearances of friendship. Milo de Cogan, who had occasion to hold some conference with the citizens of Waterford, went toward Lismore, the place appointed for their interview, attended by Ralph, another son of Fitz-Stephen, who had married his daughter. They were, by appointment, to have spent the next night at the house of an Irishman called Mac Tire, with whom they had been particularly connected. But this wretch, who, at the very moment of his hospitable invitation, harboured the most treacherous and bloody purpose, fell suddenly upon them in the midst of their security, assassinated both Cogan and his son-in-law, with five others of their company, and fled to his countrymen to boast of this exploit, and to persuade them to rise up against the foreigners. Mac-Arthy instantly took arms ; and renouncing allegiance to the English government, with the usual levity of his countrymen, marched to Cork ; where Fitz-Stephen was obliged, in the midst of grief and consternation, to provide for his defence against an enemy much superior in numbers, and obstinately bent on his destruction.

RAYMOND Le Gros, now seated in Wexford, was not inattentive to his uncle's danger ; and contrived, by a small embarkation of chosen troops,

to reinforce the garrison of Cork ; and by the terrour of his name, and the skill and vigour of his operation, forced the men of Desmond to raise the siege, and at length to submit and sue for peace : thus displaying, to the last, a spirit superiour to that of his rival, Hervey of Mountmorres, who about this time engaged in a religious life, and hid himself in a monastery, the usual retreat of spleen and disappointment. Fitz-Stephen was not sensible of this important service. Grief, vexation, and fatigue, had proved too heavy for his years, and deprived the unhappy veteran of his reason.

To supply the loss sustained in Desmond, Henry sent Richard, brother to the late Milo de Cogan^c, who led a chosen body of forces into Ireland ; and was followed by Philip Barry, another brave commander, with a new and valuable reinforcement. Girald Barry, an ecclesiastic, better known by the name of Cambrensis, attended his brother Philip in this expedition, on whose abilities Henry had such reliance, that he entrusted him with the tutelage of his son John, and now sent him to gain such information, and to assist in such dispositions as might be convenient to this prince, destined to assume the reigns of government in Ireland. For the same purpose was the archbishop of Dublin commanded to repair to his diocese.

THESE English ecclesiastics seem to have passed into Ireland with that sovereign contempt of those with whom they were to converse, and that perfect conviction of their own superiority, which bespeak a contracted mind, and which a contracted mind is not careful to conceal. While Cambren-

fis

his seemed desirous to inform himself, from his Irish brethren, of the state and circumstances of their ecclesiastical constitution, he could not refrain from mortifying them by invidious observations on their church, which they were thus piqued to defend and extol with greater zeal. They recounted the illustrious acts of those holy men, whose piety and learning had adorned the church of Ireland, and the large catalogue of saints it had produced. "Saints!" said Girald, with the utmost self-sufficiency, "Yes, you have your saints; but where are your martyrs? I cannot find one Irish martyr in your Calendar," "Alas!" replied the prelate of Cashel, who probably looked on the death of Becket as a real martyrdom, "It must be acknowledged that as yet our people have not learned such enormous guilt, as to murder god's servants; but now that Englishmen have settled in our island, and that Henry is our sovereign, we may soon expect enough of martyrs to take away this reproach from our church."

ARROGANCE naturally begat hatred; and re-
 crimination was the necessary consequence of violent invectives. In their synodical meetings, these professors of the religion of peace were chiefly employed in all the bitterness of mutual reproach. The abbot of Baltinglass, preaching on the subject of clerical continence, took occasion to extol the exemplary chastity of his brethren, before they had been infected by the contagion of English foreigners; and described the libidinous excesses of these new clergy, with an offensive acrimony. He was answered by Cambrensis with still greater acrimony, who, while he allowed the praise of chastity

to the Irish ecclesiastics, charged their whole order with revelling, falshood, barbarity, treachery, and dissimulation. The warmth which an Irish bishop expressed at such virulence served but to excite the ridicule of the other party, who observed, with a contemptuous triumph, how ill such spirit suited the effeminacy of his appearance. Contemptible as such altercations may appear, they had a dangerous influence in propagating and fomenting animosities between two people, who, circumstanced as they now were, could find their real interests only in a rational and equitable union.

AND as if all measures were to be taken to provoke the Irish natives to the utmost^r, Henry, with an instability not very accountable in so great a character, once more listened to the suggestions of those who represented the dangerous power of his Irish vice-gerent, his ambition, and his alarming connection with the king of Connaught, recalled Lacy from his government, and appointed for his successor Philip de Braosa, or Philip of Worcester as he is called, a man whose sole object was to enrich himself by plunder and oppression. His first act of power was to wrest some valuable lands from proprietors who had purchased of Lacy under pretence of appointing them for the king's provisions. He marched through different parts of the kingdom with a formidable body of troops, enforcing his exactions with the utmost vigour. At Armagh he spent six days feasting and revelling in mid-lent, to the great scandal of this seat of piety, and extorting money from the clergy with the most unrelenting severity. In vain did the sufferers plead, that by the articles of the synod of Cashel they

they were exempt from military exactions ; they had no resource but to denounce the judgments of Heaven against their ravager. A sudden fit of sickness, which seized him at his departure, was confidently declared to be the effect of such denunciations. An accidental fire in the quarters of Hugh Tirrel, one of his attendants, was converted into a miraculous punishment of his sacrilege, in robbing one of the religious houses of their furnace. This ignorant superstition served to confirm the prejudices, and enflame the aversion of the natives ; encouraging them to hope, that they should still find some favourable occasion to exterminate those, who were the declared objects of Divine wrath.

BUT the power which Philip exercised with such odious violence was not of long duration ; for prince John now^a prepared to exercise that authority in Ireland, which Henry's late donation had conferred upon him. He received the order of knighthood from his father's hand ; and a splendid train was provided to attend him to his seat of government. The Roman pontiff^o, who assumed the right of creating kings, is said to have formerly given Henry his permission to appoint which ever of his sons he should chuse king of Ireland ; and now the same ridiculous arrogance was repeated, under the pretence of favour and indulgence to the English monarch, although he had but just refused to go to the Holy Land, at the urgent instances of the pope. A legate was sent to England, who made a gracious tender of his services to wait on the prince, and to perform the ceremony of his coronation in Ireland ; presenting him at the same time with a curious diadem of peacock's feathers, hallowed

hallowed by the benediction of the sovereign pontiff. But Henry, who possibly disliked this officious interference of the pope, when it was not necessary to his purposes, and possibly apprehended, that too great exaltation might encourage his young son to such acts of disobedience as he had already experienced in his family, declined this gracious offer^c, and sent John to his government without any additional title or ceremonial, but with a considerable force, and a magnificent attendance.

A COMPANY of gallant Normans, in the pride of youth, luxurious and insolent, formed the splendid and the favourite part of this prince's train, and were followed by a number of Englishmen, strangers to the country they were to visit, desperate in their fortunes, the consequence of a life of profligacy, and filled with vast expectations of advantage from their present service. Those hardy Welshmen, who had first adventured into Ireland, and now attended to do homage to prince John, were but disagreeable mates to his gay courtiers; nor had the young prince sufficient judgment and experience to treat them with due attention^r. Glanville, a sage and eminent lawyer, had been sent by Henry to assist and direct his son. Several grave ecclesiastics were also appointed to accompany him; and among these Cambrensis, who had acquired some knowledge of the state of Ireland, and returned in order to attend his master. But men of sage and reverend characters were considered only as the formal appendages of a court, where a prince, yet in his boyish years, was engrossed by young associates, who flattered his levity, and provided for his pleasures. The whole assembly embarked

^c Girald Camb.

^r Girald.

barked in a fleet of sixty ships, and arrived at Waterford after a prosperous voyage, filling the whole country round with surprize and expectation.

THE fame of this embarkation had a happy influence upon the Irish chieftains^r, of whom several, the most refractory, now determined to do homage to the king's son, terrified by the magnificent representations of his force, and reconciled to submission by the dignity of his birth and station. But those native lords of Leinster, who had ever adhered to the English government, were the first to pay their duty to the prince, and to congratulate his arrival. They quickly flocked to Waterford, and exhibited a spectacle to the Norman courtiers, which could not fail to provoke their contempt and ridicule. They saw men cloathed in a manner totally different from their own, with hair of a different form, bushy beards, and all the marks of what they readily pronounced to be rudeness and barbarism. These unfashionable figures, who neither spake their language, nor were acquainted with their manners, advanced with great ease through the glittering circle, and, according to their own customs and notions of respect, attempted to kiss the young prince. His attendants stepped in, and prevented this horrid violation of decorum, by rudely thrusting away the Irish lords. The whole assembly burst into peals of laughter, plucked the beards, and committed various personal indignities upon their guests and allies, to demonstrate their own superior elegance of manners, and gratify the childish petulance of their master. Such were the tempers and understandings that were to regulate the affairs of a disordered kingdom,

kingdom, to protect their adherents, to conciliate the unfriendly, and to reduce the disobedient.

THE Irish lords, amidst all this disgusting plainness and novelty of appearance, were spirited and proud; tenacious of their state, and of all men most impatient of the slightest mark of contempt^r. They turned their backs upon the court, boiling with indignation; they met others of their countrymen hastening to the prince; they related the manner of their own reception; they enflamed them to the highest pitch of resentment; they returned to their habitations, collected their families and substance, and repairing, some to the chiefs of Connaught, others to those of Thomond and Desmond, enlarged on the indignities they had sustained, expressed their own determined purpose of revenge, entreated the more powerful lords to unite bravely against an enemy possessed with an obstinate and implacable aversion to their whole nation, in despite of every concession or submission; requesting them seriously to consider what treatment they were to expect who had discovered any reluctance in yielding to the English invaders, when those who had been the first to submit, found their services repaid with contemptuous insolence and outrage. The flame was readily caught. The chieftains agreed, instead of proceeding to do homage to prince John, to forget their private animosities, to unite in support of their independence, and to bind themselves in solemn league to exert their utmost endeavours to free their country from these imperious foreigners.

To enflame this dangerous spirit yet further, the attendants of prince John thought themselves every

every where privileged to harass and oppress. Even in the maritime towns, which king Henry had peculiarly reserved to himself, new grants were pretended, and new claims advanced against the citizens, to deprive them of their possessions; so that, instead of doing martial service, these veterans were wholly engaged in vexatious litigation, to guard against the attempts of rapaciousness and fraud. The Irishmen who had peaceably submitted to live under English lords, and held the lands assigned to them for their services by English tenures, were treated with still less reserve. They were at once driven from their settlements with the most disdainful insolence, to make way for these luxurious courtiers, or their minions. They fled to the enemy with the most rancorous aversion to their oppressors; informed them of the situation and circumstances of the English settlements; taught them those arts of war which they had learned by a long intercourse with the foreigners, and directed where their attacks might be most effectual and distressing.

WHILE the storm of war was thus collecting, John kept his state in idle pomp, and his attendants indulged in their usual excesses. The clergy solicited for grants to the church; the soldiers urged the necessity of defence. The religious house of Saint Thomas the Martyr received additional donations; and three castles were ordered to be raised at Tipperary, Ardfinnin, and Lismore, as a kind of barrier to the English province. But the noise of insurrection soon became terrible to this young prince and his luxurious train. The alarm of hostilities and disasters poured in from every quarter.

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The lately erected castles, and other places of strength occupied by the English, were suddenly attacked. At Lismore, Robert Barry was surprized and slain with his whole troop; Ardfinnin was attacked by the prince of Limerick; the garrison seduced into an ambush by the hopes of prey, and put to the sword without mercy. The brave Robert de la Poer was surprized and slain in Ossory. Canton and Fitz-Hugh, two other English lords of distinguished valour, met with the same fate in their different quarters. Mac-Arthy of Desmond marched against Cork; but was boldly opposed by Theobald Fitz-Walter, who had accompanied Fitz-Andelm into Ireland, and proved the founder of the noble house of Ormond. He is said to have suddenly attacked the Irish prince while in conference with certain men of Cork at some distance from the town, and to have slain him with his whole party. Such multiplied incursions could not but astonish and confound the English government. The land was laid waste; lamentations were every where heard, and affecting reports every day received of some carnage or commotion. Even in Meath, which the wise precautions of de Lacy had apparently secured from danger, a desperate inroad threatened to lay waste the whole district, and was with difficulty repelled by William Petit, a brave commander, who sent the heads of one hundred of the invaders to Dublin. The only vigorous opposition to these incursions was made by the original adventurers; for the English forces, which had lately arrived, were little accustomed to such kind of war; nor were the heavy arms of a Norman knight well calculated to repel these sudden and desultory attacks, much less to pursue an

an enemy into their woods and morasses, who disappeared as soon as they had executed their immediate purpose. After some unsuccessful attempts against their invaders, these gay soldiers, smarting with loss and disgrace, shrunk into their fortified towns, where they lived in riot, while the open country was a scene of havock and confusion. Tillage and cultivation were entirely at an end. The improvident young prince had lavished the sums appointed to pay his army; so that a dreadful dearth of provision threatened to follow close upon profuseness, war, and luxury.

EIGHT months of disorder had elapsed, before Henry was fully informed of the dangerous situation of his Irish interests, and determined to recal young John from a government so weakly and wantonly administered. The king had about this time been unhappily deprived of the services of Hugh de Lacy^r. The late incursions into Meath had not been repelled without considerable damage to his lands, which, when the country had been once composed, he was indefatigable in repairing. He proceeded without delay to rebuild the old, and to erect new forts, in every situation which required strength. Earnestly intent on these important works, his custom was to oversee the labourers, among whom were many of his Irish tenants, to point out their business, and oftentimes to labour in the trenches with his own hands, for their greater encouragement and direction. One of these forts he was proceeding to erect at Dorrowe^e, or Derwarth, as the historians call the place, upon the site of a venerable abbey. The Irish were shocked at such profanation of this ancient seat of devotion,

devotion, a residence of one of their most renowned saints ; and the hatred of their invader, enflamed by this superstition, operated upon one of the workmen even to a degree of phrenzy. He seized the moment when Lacy was employed in the trenches ; and as he stooped down to explain his orders, drew out his battle-ax, which had been concealed under his long mantle, and at one vigorous blow smote off his head. He was too much favoured by his countrymen not to effect his escape. The flame of insurrection was instantly re-kindled in Meath. The news of Lacy's death was eagerly spread abroad, and joyfully received^D. The ignorant clergy represented it as an act of vengeance executed by the holy Kolomb-kill on this sacrilegious usurper of his abbey, and ravager of Irish churches : The people were thus taught to exult and triumph in this treacherous assassination ; and the Irish insurgents of all parts were confirmed and encouraged in their hostile purposes^E. As the robust and boisterous valour of de Courcey seemed to be Henry's best resource in this dangerous situation of affairs, he was entrusted with the Irish government ; and John returned to England with his giddy train^F, who seemed pleased to escape from a country of turbulence and danger.

DE COURCEY thus left with the old adventurers, proceeded to the business of war, for which he was best calculated, with indefatigable vigour. In conjunction with young Lacy, son to the late lord, he is said to have taken severe vengeance for the murder of his gallant countryman^A. He kept his forces in continual action, repelling his invaders

^D Ibid.^N A. D. 1186.^E Girald. Camb.^A Hanmer, Girald. Camb.

ders, and terrifying them by the fame of his valour and the spirit of his operations. And in this defensive war (for to such was he reduced) many circumstances concurred to favour him, and to preserve the English power from that total extirpation with which it had been lately threatened. The native Irish, in all the mischiefs they had wrought, acted from sudden fits of passion and violence, which time naturally allayed. Their national pride still made them too insensible to the progress of the English, and the real consequence of their settlements, even at the very time when they vowed the most desperate attempts against them. They, who in the provinces most distant from the seat of English government^c, felt least from their invaders, soon forgot the common danger, when not immediately impending, and turned their attention to those particular quarrels which still raged among themselves. In the northern parts of Ireland, instead of bending their whole force against the English settlements, the chiefs were engaged in the bloodiest hostilities against each other. In Connaught, the rebellious sons of Roderic at length prevailed, deposed the unhappy father, and obliged him to seek refuge from a life of turbulence and vexation, in the venerable monastery of Cong. Old claims to the nominal sovereignty of Ireland were revived^r. One pretender of the O'Loughlan family was deposed; another succeeded, ended his short career in a violent death, and his right was restored; but falling in a skirmish with one of the English garrisons of Ulster, left the futile object of dispute to produce new disorders. Factions and local feuds were thus multiplied^p; and in the rage of jealousy and revenge,

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the weaker party sometimes sought assistance even in the English settlements.

DE COURCEY was thus better enabled to support his government against a divided and distracted enemy. But of a temper too bold and violent to be long contented with acting on the defensive, he resolved to make an attempt upon the disordered province of Connaught^x. He collected his bravest knights, and the most considerable part of his English forces, and marched with more valour than circumspection, into a country where he expected a complete conquest, without resistance. He soon learned, however, that Connor Moienmoy, the reigning son of Roderic, and O'Brien, the Munster prince, were preparing to attack him with numbers much superiour to his own, and considerably improved both in arms and discipline, by their contests and intercourse with the English. De Courcey was at once determined, by this alarming intelligence, to put an end to his rash adventure, by a speedy retreat into Ulster. But scarcely had he proceeded to the execution of his purpose, when he was informed that another powerful army lay in an advantageous situation, ready to oppose his progress. He returned to his former camp, when the confederate army of Connaught and Thomond immediately appeared, and threatened to overwhelm him. The courage of the English was here put to a severe trial. The enemy pressed upon them; nor did they repel their repeated assaults without considerable loss. Their only hopes were to secure a retreat; and in forcing their way through the Irish army, several of their brave knights were slaughtered; a retreat, however, was effected;

effected; and the enemy were contented with the glory of driving de Courcey from the province.

THIS disgrace of the English arms (for such it was esteemed by those who were not judges of the merit of this retreat^r) encouraged the chieftains of Ulster and Argial to attack the English settlements in their territories. A survivor of the family of O'Loughlan fell in his rash attempt on one of the garrisons of Ulster. O'Carrol, the Irish prince of Argial, was defeated in a like attack; and the chieftain of Fermanagh, his associate, slain in the pursuit. To suppress these petty commotions, de Courcey marched once more into Ulster; stormed and burned the town of Armagh, where his enemies had assembled, terrified them by the violence of his execution, and re-established an appearance of tranquility through the whole province, without any opposition from his enemies of Connaught. Here Connor Moienmoy fell by the hand of an assassin hired by his own ambitious brother. This brother was slain in revenge by a son of Connor; and the province once more involved in anarchy and slaughter, the dreadful consequences of unnatural rebellion among the sons of Roderic. And thus by his own vigour, and the dissensions of his enemies, John de Courcey was enabled to maintain the authority of English government; and to support the acquisitions already made in Ireland by vigilance and courage, though not to extend them by reconciling those who submitted with a sullen rancour, or subduing the more open and avowed contemners of his authority.

SUCH was the situation of affairs in Ireland, when Henry the second, harrassed by the treachery

of his vassals, the machinations of France, and the disobedience and revolt of his sons, sunk under those accumulated vexations which he had so long supported with magnanimity and vigour, and died at Chinon, in July of the year 1189; a prince, whom impartial judgment and reflection must rank among the first characters of history. They who conceive that rightful power must ever have a pure and rightful origin, have been at considerable pains to defend his invasion of Ireland upon the principles of justice; and have supported his claims to the sovereignty of this country with a seriousness and solemnity as ridiculous as the pains which their antagonists have taken to invalidate them. Henry himself was too discerning to ransack the fabulous histories of Britain, or the forged annals of the Saxon reigns, or to recur to the formal donations of the pope, for any other purpose but to give his enterprize some colour of pretence, or some degree of plausibility with the vulgar, the prejudiced, and the superstitious. But whatever were the original pretences of his enterprize, the ambition of his youth and prosperity would have proved of singular advantage to a disordered nation, had the incidents of his reign permitted him to effect a real conquest, and of consequence the establishment of a wise and equitable form of government in Ireland.

CIRCUMSTANCED as he was, upon the first application of the Leinster prince, the only prudent measure he could have taken, was to encourage private adventurers to court their fortune in his service. Their rapid progress might, in time, have completed the subjection of the whole country. But the acquisition would have been their own.

The policy of Henry is therefore, not impeached by discouraging and controuling them. His personal appearance in Ireland promised a speedier and more effectual establishment of his dominion, had he been suffered to continue there. Nor can we reflect, without indignation, that a prince, of such abilities as Henry, was diverted from a purpose of such real moment, by the contemptible insolence of a pope, and the disobedience of an ungrateful son. The measures he pursued, in consequence of this fatal interruption, were those of good policy controuled by necessity; but such as neither tended to allay his jealousy of the growing power of his vassals, nor yet to advance the progress of their arms. Extensive grants and privileges, necessary as they might have been, tended to create independence. A change of deputies, and a succession of new settlers, raised jealousies and animosities between the English themselves. The original adventurers were piqued at the partiality shewn to the new settlers; the new settlers envied the original adventurers; and the consequence might have proved fatal, had not their enemies been still more disunited. The very terms of his treaty with Roderic O'Connor shew, that Henry was obliged to yield to the necessity of his affairs, and to accommodate the transactions in Ireland to his more pressing interests. At least, it is more honourable to his policy, to suppose that his original purpose was something of greater value than to acquire a sovereignty marked by nothing but a formal homage, and an inconsiderable tribute.

CAMBRENSIS calls his history of the transactions now related, that of the Conquest of Ireland; a ridiculous flattery of his master Henry, which has

frequently been echoed by succeeding writers. The court chaplain of the twelfth century may be pardoned ; but when the professor of laws in the eighteenth, asserts in form, that Ireland was conquered by Henry the second, and hence proceeds to establish the formidable rights of conquest, it may not be impertinent to state the real matter of fact. And thus it seems to be.

SOME English lords, with their vassals, engage in the service of an exiled prince in one of the Irish provinces. They have towns and lands assigned to them for their service, in assisting him to recover his dominions. They resign their acquisitions to Henry, and are again invested with most of them, which they consent to hold as his liege subjects, by the usual English tenures. Henry, on his part, promising that these his subjects, in their new settlement, shall, with all their dependencies, enjoy the advantage of their old constitution, and be governed by the laws of England. Several of the Irish chiefs also submit to pay homage and tribute to Henry ; and in consequence of their cessions receive his promise to enjoy their other rights and privileges. Roderic, who claims a superiority over the others, after having bidden defiance to the English monarch for a while, at length, by a treaty regularly conducted and executed, engages on his part to become his liege-man, and to pay him tribute ; on which condition it is expressly stipulated that he shall enjoy his rights, lands, and sovereignties, as fully as before the king of England ever appeared, or interfered in Ireland. No contracts could be more explicitly or precisely ascertained. Accordingly, the English adventurers govern their district by their own mo-

del ; the native chiefs, though far the greater part of Ireland, act independently of the English government ; make war and peace, enter into leagues and treaties amongst each other ; punish malefactors, and govern by their own antient laws and customs. It requires but a moderate attention to the records of these times, to know what degree of real power Henry acquired in Ireland ; and but a moderate skill in politics to decide what rights he acquired either over the English adventurers, or the native Irish, by his federal transactions with each ; whether we consider the grounds of his invasion, or the nature and extent of their submissions, or the purport of his stipulations.

RICHARD, on his accession to the throne of England, was too much engaged, by more brilliant objects, to enquire minutely into the royal claims in Ireland ; and too indulgent to his brother John to question the power and authority he derived from his father's grant, and exercised in this country^c. The style which John now assumed was that of John earl of Moreton, and lord of Ireland. By this latter title he had formerly granted lands to the monastery of Saint Thomas the Martyr at Donoure, as well as the customs of beer and mead, which, as it is expressed in the charter, he used to receive from the publicans of Dublinⁿ. And one of the first acts of authority which he now exercised, was to grant to this religious house a tenth of the revenue of *his* city of Dublin, as it is expressly called. By another charter it was invested with several privileges and possessions, with immunities from all exactions and secular services^a, excepting only—in *hiis quæ ad regiam coronam pertinent* ;

^c Chartæ ant. var. ⁿ Chartæ ant. penes Com. Midia. ^a Ibid.

pertinent; with a power of holding a court for all pleas and complaints, *nisi de hiis quæ ad regiam coronam spectaverint*. To the city of Dublin he granted franchises and liberties, to be held of him and his heirs^g. He granted lands to be held by knights service, of him and his heirs, with liberties and free customs, and with a reservation of churchlands, donations of bishoprics and abbies, and pleas belonging to the crown. He confirmed a grant of lands to the abbot of Glendalagh, and united the see of Glendalagh to that of Dublin. The deputies appointed to govern in Ireland, during the reign of Richard, were appointed by John; as we learn from the minority of pope Innocent III. addressed to John, in which he calls Hamo de Valoniis Officialis nobilis, viri comitis de Mauritania, and commands him to oblige this his minister to restore whatever he had taken from the church of Leighlin. Hoveden also calls Hamo de Valoniis *et cæteri custodes Hiberniæ, homines comitis Johannis fratris Ricardi regis Angliæ*.

WE see then what essential acts of power John exercised in Ireland, during the reigns of his father and of Richard. Yet whatever pompous idea the name of lord of Ireland may convey, he was certainly lord of Ireland in no other sense, than the English governours appointed by Henry had been governours of Ireland. In the parts of this kingdom not immediately possessed by the English, his authority was not acknowledged even by foreigners. For when king Richard had prevailed on the pope to send his legate, in order to solicit contributions

^g Lib Nig. Archiepif. Dublin. Ant. Lit. Patent. Lib. nig. Archiepif. Dublin. Regif. vocat. Crede mihi. Epif. Decret. Edit. a Baluz.

contributions for his expedition to the Holy Land, this legate was commissioned to exercise his jurisdiction in England, Wales^A, and those parts of Ireland, in which John earl of Moreton, had power and dominion. John himself speaks in the same manner; for in his charter of franchises to the citizens of Dublin, he grants them immunities, not through all Ireland^T, where they could not be acknowledged or enjoyed, but, as he expresses it, *per totam terram. & potestatem meam*. And Eva, the heiress of king Dermot, speaks with still more precision^V. She confirms the grants made to the see of Dublin by earl John, and other good men of Leinster, the proper and immediate seat of English power*.

WHILE John reserved the exercise of the above-mentioned powers to himself, the administration of affairs in Ireland, and the support of his authority in this kingdom, were entrusted to the English deputies. On the accession of Richard, Hugh de Lacy the younger had so effectually recommended himself to earl John, that he was enabled to supplant de Courcey^D, and obtained his government.

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^A Math. Paris. ^T Lib. Nig. Archiepis. Dublin.

^V Regist. vocat Crede mihi.

* E registro vocato Crede Mihi, fol. 90.

“Omnibus tam presentibus quam futuris, ad quos presens charta pervenerint. Eva comitissa hæres regis Dermotii, salutem.

“Noverit universitas vestra me, pro salute animæ meæ & domini mei comitis Ricardii, & antecessorum meorum, concessisse, & præsentī charta confirmasse Deo & ecclesiæ Dublinensi, & Johanni ejusdem ecclesiæ archiepiscopo, & successoribus suis, omnes possessiones & eleemosynas, tam in ecclesiasticis quam in mundanis tenementis, quas eis comes Johannes & alii boni viri de Lagenia, pia largitione contulerunt. Et volo quod præfata ecclesia, & ejusdem ecclesiæ archiepiscopi eas teneant & habeant libere, quiete, & honorifice, & integre, cum omnibus pertinentiis suis, in perpetuam eleemosynam, sicut charta donatorum testantur. Testibus, &c.”

^D Hanmer.

The rough uncourtly soldier could not conceal his indignation to find the merit of his services thus slighted. He retired to Ulster, resolving to avail himself of the grants he had received from Henry, and to confine his attention to his own immediate interests, as a private adventurer. By detaching himself from the new deputy, he betrayed the real weakness of the English government, a system of a fair and plausible appearance, but unable to support the jealousies and contests of rival lords. The Irish natives were not insensible of their advantage ; nor had the national spirit, though frequently suppressed, been yet entirely extinguished by their private quarrels.

AMONG the survivors of the rebellious house of Roderic O'Connor, Cathal, surnamed the Bloody-Handed, now stood highest in the esteem of his countrymen ; and by the assistance of a powerful faction had been invested with the royal dignity of Connaught. An elevation obtained by intrigue and violence, was to be supported by those qualities which strike the multitude most forcibly. Cathal soon discovered an extraordinary passion for military glory ; declared himself resolved to assert the antient honours of his family, his province, and his country ; and particularly breathed the most desperate and determined vengeance against those foreigners who had usurped some of the fairest possessions in the nation, deformed the land, and insulted the inhabitants by their castles and fortifications, and threatened to extend their oppressions through the whole island. Applause and popularity were the consequence of such declarations. His provincials admired, and therefore followed

followed and obeyed him with an alacrity not always commanded by the mere regal title. The chiefs of Munster respected a young warrior, who promised to lead his countrymen to victory and glory. They readily consented to form an alliance with him. That they might act with more vigour against a common enemy, the lords of Thomond and Desmond agreed to bury their old quarrels in oblivion^e, and to conclude a formal treaty of peace upon amicable and equitable terms.

DE COURCEY, who perceived the rising storm, was solicitous to strengthen his settlements in Ulster, which were threatened with a formidable attack. He could expect no succour from de Lacey, and therefore determined to collect all the forces he could command of his own immediate followers^a. Armoric of Saint Lawrence, his trusty friend and counsellor, was instantly called off from some petty enterprize, in which he had engaged, and marched without delay to the assistance of de Courcey, with a little body of two hundred foot, and thirty cavalry. Cathal, through part of whose province they were to march, was informed of their motions, and resolved to intercept them. The brave English knight soon found he had incautiously fallen into an ambush, where an army, vastly superiour to his own inconsiderable troop, lay ready to destroy him. To contend with any hope of success would be madness; to surrender, dishonourable and dangerous. In this desperate emergency the love of life so far prevailed upon the cavalry, that they resolved to trust to the fleetness of their horses before they were entirely surrounded, and leave their companions to their fate. The infantry were soon informed

informed of this resolution ; and, with the brother of Armoric at their head, gathered round their companions, and reproached them with their ignoble purpose; reminded them of the many toils and dangers in which they had supported each other, the friendships and affinities they had mutually formed, the attachment and fidelity they had mutually experienced from each other ; conjuring them by every tender and affecting motive not to disgrace their former conduct, nor to abandon their fellow-soldiers and their brethren to the fury of a barbarous and revengeful enemy. The heroic spirit was readily excited. Armoric drew his sword, and plunged it into his horse ; the cavalry followed his example, and with one voice declared that they would share the fate of their companions ; that death was now inevitable, and that they would meet it boldly with their weapons in their hands, rather than stain their honour, by submitting to the mercy of an enemy they had so often vanquished.

MEN thus determined are dangerous antagonists. They proceeded to the execution of their purpose with firmness and composure^x. Two, the youngest of their body, were ordered to retire to a neighbouring eminence, there to view the engagement, and to bear a faithful report to John de Courcey of the conduct of his friends in this their last hour of desperate encounter. The rest marched forward with a confidence astonishing to the Irish army. Cathal at first imagined that they must have received a formidable reinforcement, and that he was now to engage a regular army ; but soon found this little troop in the midst of his collected forces, without support or resource. They rushed desperately

rately upon the enemy; they forced their way with terrible havock through the crowds of their assailants, of whom a thousand are said to have fallen under their furious impressi^on. As they were completely armed, they sustained repeated onsets before they could be wounded; and the wounded still obstinately persevered in supporting and encouraging each other, till they fell under the oppression of a contest so desperate, not one deigning to survive the carnage. An advantage gained with such difficulty, and so little honour, was yet sufficient for the levity and vanity of Cathal^a. He founded an abbey upon the field of action, called de Colle Victoriæ; and by this weak and inconsiderate mark of triumph raised a trophy to the romantic valour of his enemies.

THE reports of insurrections and confederacies were soon conveyed to England, and alarmed earl John, amidst the still more interesting schemes of his ambition, for the security of his Irish government. To encrease the public confusion and distress in this kingdom, the city of Dublin was almost totally destroyed by an accidental fire^e; and the neighbouring districts were infested by robbers, who annoyed the inhabitants without restraint or correction*.

PUBLIC

^a MSS. Lambeth. P. No. 628, f. 52. Ann. M. Abb. MSS.
^e Hanmer.

* Dr. Hanmar has preserved an old tradition, importing, that on the dispersion of the troop headed by the famous Robin Hood, some of his followers fled to Ireland as a place of disorder, and of consequence fitted for their shelter as well as the practice of their usual violences; that, of these, one, known among the old popular rhymers of England by the name of Little John, appeared publicly in Dublin, and astonished the inhabitants by his feats of archery, until his robberies became so notorious and provoking, that he was driven for safety into Scotland.

PUBLIC disorders, and the alarm of wars and commotions, served to cast a suspicion of some want of abilities and vigour on the administration of de Lacey. William Petit was substituted in his place, and was soon succeeded by William, earl marshal of England. This nobleman had married Isabella, daughter to earl Strongbow, by the princess of Leinster; and of consequence was invested with large possessions in Ireland; a circumstance which seems to have made him the readier to accept his present charge. A nobleman so connected with the country was likely to be received with favour; and the dignity of his rank and character promised weight and consequence to his administration.

AND a government of extraordinary vigour was now absolutely necessary. The prince of Connaught had by his late success, which was industriously magnified, raised a dangerous spirit among the Irish chiefs, his confederates. Daniel O'Brien, the reigning prince of Thomond, that he might not be outdone by his countryman and ally^r, levied a considerable force, and declared hostilities against the English borderers. The contending parties encountered at Thurles, where victory declared in favour of the troops of Thomond. This disgrace, however, did not prevent the English from continuing the war, ravaging the territories of O'Brien, and erecting several forts to keep their enemies in awe, and to secure their own settlements. They even extended their depredations into Desmond, where the Irish leaders, notwithstanding all their boasted schemes, proved unable to oppose their invaders; and while they submitted to see their
country

country fortified against themselves, found no better pretence to palliate this supineness, than to charge their late ally, the prince of Thomond, with perfidy, in secretly favouring and assisting the common enemy. Such suspicions might have produced a bloody contest between the provincial chiefs, had not the effects been prevented by the death of Daniel O'Brien; an event which gave new confidence to the English, and enabled them, in the confusion of the province, and the distractions arising from a contested succession to pierce into the very heart of Thomond. If we are to believe the Irish annalists, they exercised the utmost cruelties in their triumphant progress, and especially upon the family of O'Brien; one of whose sons was blinded, and another dragged from sanctuary, and massacred in the fury of their resentment. Such representations might be at once rejected as the forgeries of national prejudice and aversion, did not the abbot of Peterborough expressly declare, that the successor of O'Brien was deterred from submitting to the English by the miseries of his people, and the barbarities exercised by their invaders.

BUT an advantage so shamefully abused was not of long duration. Cathal, the Connaught prince, was informed of the bloody progress of his enemies, and entered Munster at the head of a formidable army, which the English were utterly unable to oppose. They retired precipitately at his approach; and Cathal, with all the triumph of a victorious prince, rased their castles to the ground, to the surprize and admiration of his countrymen, who expected nothing less than the utter extirpation of their enemies from a young warrior, in all the

pride of fortune and popular favour. But this chief, who had neither Judgment to concert, nor real power to execute any masterly plan for the subversion of the English establishments, contented himself with the honour of defying and insulting the enemy, and retired to his province, leaving them to repair the havock he had made. And scarcely had they attempted this necessary work, when they found themselves again exposed to the attacks of Mac-Arthy and Desmond; who with a valour less glaring^r, but more determined than that of Cathal, led his forces against the English upon their return to Munster, defeated them in the field, and pursued his advantage till he had driven them out of Limerick, and confirmed his superiority, by twice defeating their attempts to recover this important place.

CORKE was now the only considerable post of strength in Munster, which remained in the possession of the English. And, as the garrison were surrounded by their enemies of Desmond, it was not possible for them to subsist, much less to maintain their station, without some powerful support. The occasion was too striking not to command the attention of the English government. A considerable force was detached into the South to check the dangerous progress of the enemy; yet not sufficiently numerous to encounter the Desmonians, now reinforced by the troops of Connaught, headed by their warlike prince^g, those of O'Loughlan, chief of the antient house of the northern Hi-Nial, and those of some other Irish lords. The English army received a total defeat; and the garrison of Corke, cut off from all resources, seemed

seemed destined to immediate destruction. But the secret jealousies of their enemies served to suspend their fate. Cathal and O'Loughlan, the heads of two great rival houses, however they appeared to unite in one common cause, envied and hated each other. The rising fame and power of Cathal were particularly offensive to a competitor filled with the pride of family, impatient of his present inferiority, and sensible that the current of success could not fail to swell the power and influence of the prince of Connaught. In the spleen of jealousy and envy, he practised secretly with Mac-Arthy; and to the utter confusion and astonishment of the confederate army, prevailed on him to raise the siege of Corke. The English garrison were thus saved from immediate destruction; but without succours or provisions, cut off from all intercourse with their countrymen, and perpetually harassed by their enemies, they were in a short time obliged to capitulate; and Corke was surrendered to the prince of Desmond.

THE loss of this important place too plainly indicated the weakness of a government, which could not even defend those maritime towns that king Henry had reserved to himself as of greatest consequence. The feeble attempts made to regain the English interests in Munster served only to discover the real superiority of their enemies. Though dissensions in the family of O'Brien, and the ambitious designs of one of the sons of Daniel to supplant the rightful heir^d, gave the English an opportunity of again invading Thomond; and although repeated attempts were made upon the territory of Desmond, yet the whole effect of such expeditions

expeditions was to waste and ravage the country, without any acquisition of real and permanent advantage.

SUCH was the progress of events, during the administration of the earl Marshal ; when Hamo de Valois was appointed to succeed him in the year 1197, a period of the utmost public confusion and distress ; when John de Courcey, and Hugh de Lacey, were employed in their respective provinces, independent of the English government, almost all Munster evacuated by the English, and the province of Leinster with difficulty maintained. To supply the urgent necessities of a distressed and enfeebled government, Hamo could devise no more immediate and effectual expedient than an invasion of the ecclesiastical possessions. He began his administration (possibly by the instruction of earl John^x) with seizing several lands which had been granted to the see of Dublin ; an act of violence the most odious and offensive, at a time when the rights of ecclesiastics were accounted infinitely more sacred than those of other subjects. Comyn, the archbishop, was too nearly interested, not to inveigh against such usurpation with the utmost bitterness. He remonstrated, he expostulated, he denounced the vengeance of heaven against the abominable sacrilege, yet without redress. He professed to consider such obstinacy as a violent expulsion from his pastoral charge, and resolved to abandon his diocese, rather than seem to acquiesce in the profane usurpation of its rights. He repaired to his cathedral, in all the solemn affliction of a confessor weighed down by persecution. Books, chalices, images, and all the gaudy apparatus

apparatus of public service were removed. With a strain of blasphemous hypocrisy he ordered the crucifixes to be crowned with thorns, and laid prostrate on the ground, (as if the passion were renewed, and the Majesty of heaven dethroned by a contest about the paltry property of an ecclesiastic) and laying the tremendous sentence of interdict upon his diocese, departed from the kingdom. A miracle was devised, to affect the minds of the ignorant and superstitious still more deeply. One of those prostrate crucifixes was shewn, with all the marks of agony impressed upon it; the face inflamed, the eyes dropping tears, the body covered with sweat, and blood and water issuing from its side. The exiled prelate received this wonderful declaration of heaven in his favour, solemnly attested by his clergy, to be laid before the Roman pontiff. Yet his enemies were still obdurate. His suffragans were too anxious for the preservation of their own properties to provoke the civil government, by espousing the quarrel of their metropolitan*. His earnest applications to earl John, and those to king Richard, were equally neglected^c. Nor was it till some years after that Hamo de Valois felt compunction for his offence, and granted to the see of Dublin twenty carucates of land, in atonement for the depredations he had committed in the course of his government.

VOL. I.

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DURING

* Hamo did not confine his depredations to the see of Dublin. When that of Leighlin became vacant, he would not suffer the abbot of Rosseval, who had been elected bishop by the clergy, to be consecrated; and seized the temporalities to his own use, or that of the state. This produced a monitory epistle from pope Innocent the third; which may be found in the edition of Baluzius; and by some expressions seems to intimate, that earl John still wished or expected to receive the title of king of Ireland from the pope.

^c Reg. Alani. Reg. vocat. Crede mihi. Lib. Nig. Archiepis. Dublin.

DURING these disorders, Roderic O'Connor, last of the Irish monarchs, died in extreme old age, in the monastery of Cong^r, where he passed twelve years of quiet, unnoticed by the contending factions of his province. The brilliancy of his conduct, on first acquiring the monarchical dignity, if duly sustained, might have established his authority on a firmer basis than the suffrage of a triumphant faction, which conferred the title, and left him to defend it. A generous and enlarged policy must have prompted him to gain over his old opposers by every conciliating means. But Roderic had not this policy. The power which he acquired was employed to revenge his former quarrels, and oppress the partizans of his former rival; and this produced that momentous event, the first English invasion.

NOR doth his military character, so celebrated by his countrymen, appear to any advantage in his contests with the English. Yet it would be rash to form the severest opinion of this part of his conduct, as we are not distinctly informed of the obstacles and difficulties he encountered. The Irish annalists, who record his actions, were little acquainted with intrigues of policy or faction, and little attentive to their operations. They confine themselves to the plain exposition of events; tell us of an insurrection, a victory, or a retreat; but never think of developing the secret causes that produced or influenced these events. We know that Roderic led great armies against Dermot and his English allies; but they were collected by inferior chiefs, many of whom hated and envied him. They were not implicitly obedient to their monarch;

monarch; they were not paid; they were not obliged to keep the field; but were ready to desert him on the most critical emergency, if the appointed period of their service should then happen to expire. The disorders of his own family commenced almost with his reign. Their progress was desperate and bloody, and must have proved an afflicting embarrassment in all his actions and designs. If Henry the second, with his vast abilities and resources, was driven almost to the brink of ruin by the rebellion of his son, we are the less to wonder, that a like unnatural defection of the sons of Roderic could meet with such support, and be attended with such success, as to deprive him of his throne. A monastic retreat might have afforded him a shelter from outrage, but not repose of mind; unless he were a total stranger to the transactions of his province, or totally insensible to the most affecting incidents. While he was employed in formal prayers and penances, his sons were butchering each other, and deluging the land with blood. If he were touched with these misfortunes and excesses, and yet incapable of interposing to prevent them; we cannot well imagine an object more pitiable than a helpless, unfriended, unsupported prince, at the age of almost ninety, immured by rebellious children, without power or authority to restrain their outrages, now turned against each other, and afflicted at the miseries of those who had deposed him. His last period of life, however, was somewhat comforted, by finding the cruel dissensions of his family end in the dominion of a young warrior of his own blood, who promised to exterminate the invaders, and retrieve the honours of his country. If he entertained

such hopes, happily he did not survive them. The death of a king is generally attended with some interesting consequences; but that of Roderic, who had long ceased to exercise the regal power, was one of those indifferent and unaffecting incidents, which are just related and forgotten.

By the demise of Richard the first in the succeeding year, and the accession of his brother, the rights, transferred to John as lord of Ireland, reverted, with the title, to the crown of England.



C H A P. VI.

State of government in Ireland at the accession of king John.—Meiler Fitz-Henry succeeds to Hamo de Valois.—Disaffection of John de Courcey.—Both he and Hugh de Lacey affect independence.—Grants to Braosa and de Burgo.—Progress of de Burgo.—He dethrones Cathal king of Connaught.—Defeats O'Nial, de Courcey, and de Lacey in their attempt to restore Cathal.—His progress in Munster.—Cathal practices with de Burgo.—Defeats and kills his rival.—Is restored.—His ingratitude.—Meiler marches to reduce de Burgo.—Is joined by Cathal and by O'Brien.—De Burgo surrenders, and returns to his allegiance.—The chiefs of Connaught and Thomond give hostages to Meiler.—Two parts of his province ceded by Cathal.—Cause of the revolt of the English barons in Ireland.—Violence of de Courcey.—Is accused by Hugh de Lacey to king John.—The Lacies commissioned to reduce de Courcey.—Who is obliged to abandon Ulster.—Receives the king's safe conduct, and repairs to England.—Romantic detail of de Courcey's being betrayed into the hands of Hugh de Lacey.—Of Hugh's indignation at the treachery, and his punishment of the agents.—Of de Courcey and the French Champion.—Of the surprising proof of his bodily strength.—Remarks on this detail.—Hugh gains the earldom of Ulster.—Repairs to the king.—Aid for the recovery of Normandy demanded from the Irish clergy.—Pope Innocent's controversy with John begins in Ireland.—Dispute about the succession to the see of Armagh.—John prevailed upon to acknowledge and admit the pope's prelate.—Soon experiences the dreadful consequences.—In the midst of his

contest with the pope he undertakes an expedition into Ireland.—State of Ireland at this period.—Cause of John's displeasure against the Lacies—and against William de Braosa.—The Lacies fly from Ireland at the arrival of John.—He grants his Irish subjects a charter of laws—which is deposited in the Exchequer of Dublin.—He makes a new division of counties.—The wife and family of William de Braosa imprisoned.—The Lacies distressed in France.—Are restored to favour, and reinstated in their possessions.—John departs from Ireland.—Administration of John de Grey.—Circumstances favourable to his government.—Interposition of king John in favour of Cathal.—John strives to gain the Irish princes by courtesy.—Henry de Londres, prelate of Dublin, acts as an English baron.—Expresses his indignation at the conduct of Pandulf.—His transactions in the congress of Runingmede.—Accession of Henry the third.—Requisitions of his barons in Ireland.—Letter of Henry de Geoffry de Maurisco.—Grant of the great charter of liberties to his subjects of Ireland.

AN undisputed succession to the crown of England, and a peaceful sovereignty, might have proved an happy incident to Ireland, by enabling John to apply his present accession of power to the compleat settlement of an island, harrassed and afflicted by a variety of contests and competitions, oppressed by avarice, and mangled by faction. But John, who had seized the throne in prejudice to the claim of Arthur of Bretagne, son to his elder brother, had all the difficulties of an usurpation to encounter. His continental in-

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terests were to be secured, his refractory barons to be gained, the intrigues of France to be defeated, Arthur and his partizans to be reconciled or reduced; so that at the very commencement of his unhappy and inglorious reign, he was involved in cares and difficulties; and amidst the more interesting objects of his concern, had neither leisure nor inclination to attend to the affairs of Ireland.

SOME former grants indeed were renewed^x, at the instances of those who had obtained them, as well to the church as to the lay barons; and Hamo de Valois, who, from harrassing the ecclesiastics, proceeded to commit depredations on the laity, and amassed considerable riches at the expence both of the subject and the crown^y, was removed from his government with disgrace, and obliged to pay the king one thousand marks, as a discharge from his accounts. Meiler Fitz-Henry, natural son of Henry the first, and one of the most distinguished barons who had originally adventured into Ireland, was appointed to succeed him; but unassisted by the king, and ill supported by the great lords, who enjoyed their Irish grants and acquisitions, he was confined to the seat of government, without a force for any brave attempt worthy of his valour and abilities. John de Courcey, and Hugh de Lacey, two of the most powerful settlers in Ireland, had for some time affected a state of independence. The former had lived in almost perpetual hostilities with the chiefs of Ulster; and though sometimes defeated^z, particularly by his most active and powerful opponent, Hugh O'Nial of Tir-owen, yet by an obstinate and

^x Chart. penes Com. Mid. MSS. Rot. Tur. Lond.

^y MSS. Lambeth.

^z Ann. Angn. MSS.

and indefatigable valour, he still maintained his acquisitions. But far from acknowledging allegiance to king John, he openly and boldly impeached his title to the crown; and seemed rather to assume the port of an Irish chieftain, than an English baron^r. Both he and de Lacey entered into treaties with the neighbouring lords, and assisted in their local and provincial contests, which were immediately resumed, as soon as any advantage gained over the English enflamed their pride, and allayed the sudden fit of national resentment.

AMONG the grants renewed by John^r, were those of the lands of Thomond to Philip de Braosa, and William his son, excepting the city of Limerick, which, with the lands formerly granted in Connaught, was assigned to the custody of William de Burgo, a baron of the family of Fitz-Andelm. And these lords now appeared with a formidable train of followers to support their claims^r. De Burgo, who seems to have acted with peculiar vigour, soon contrived to possess himself of Limerick, and to form a settlement, which threatened all Munster, distracted as it was by the barbarous quarrels of rival chiefs. The like factious competitions in Connaught enabled him to assert his claims in this province. Cathal the bloody-handed, who, at the first beginnings of his reign, had promised such prodigies of successful valour, found himself suddenly controuled by the secret practices of his enemies, his popularity decliningⁿ, his partizans revolting with their usual fickleness, and an enterprizing and subtle rival labouring to supplant him. Carragh O'Connor, a chieftain of his own blood, aspired to the royal dignity of Connaught, formed

^r Ibid.^y Cox.^k Ann. Anon. MSS.ⁿ Ibid.

formed a party in support of his pretensions, but, instead of proceeding with the usual violence and precipitation of his countrymen, addressed himself secretly to de Burgoⁿ; and promising to invest him with those lands which he claimed by the grant of John, engaged him in his service against a prince, who, by his former conduct, was judged to be peculiarly averse to the admission of such claims. Their enterprize was conducted with ability and vigour, and was attended with success. Cathal, suddenly attacked even in his own court, and utterly unprovided for defence, fled precipitately from the province^r, and left his rival Carragh in possession of the regal dignity.

THE news of this sudden and extraordinary revolution was received by the neighbouring chieftains with astonishment. The exiled prince fled to O'Nial of Tir-Owen; made the most pathetic representations of his wrongs, and entreated his assistance against this injurious usurpation. He was received, commiserated, and consoled with the assurance of an effectual supportⁿ. A confederacy was formed, and a powerful army raised by the influence of the northern chief. Taught by the example of Carragh, they sacrificed their national prejudices to the interests of the present enterprize, entered into treaty with de Courcey and de Lacey, and prevailed on them to unite their forces in the cause of Cathal. Thus were English lords engaged against each other, in the local factions and contentions of the natives, so deeply were they already tainted by their contagious manners. The usurper and his English allies, commanded by de Burgo,

ⁿ Ware ex Ann. MSS. ^r Ann. Anon. MSS. A. D. 1199.

ⁿ Ibid.

Burgo, marched out to meet their invaders, and encountered them with the utmost bravery. The conflict was obstinately supported *; but victory at length declared in favour of the troops of Connaught, and those of Ulster and Meath were pursued with considerable slaughter. To aggravate the misfortune of O'Nial, whose power, like that of other Irish princes, was maintained, or at least considerably affected by opinion, his subjects, in the vexation of their defeat, passionately renounced his authority; and in his place substituted another chieftain of Tir-Owen *; who, in his eagerness to impress them with a favourable idea of his valour, fell in an engagement with the forces of Tir-Connel; an event which, as usual, involved his territory in factions, usurpations and massacres. If the Irish annalists dwell on the shocking detail of such excesses, it seems to be imputed, not so much to any natural defect of sensibility, as to superstition, that fatal corrupter of our generous and humane affections. No chief was ever slain either by war or assassination, but was found to have by some means offended one of their renowned saints. His death was the vengeance of heaven; and was to be distinctly noted, in order to display the power of this offended saint, and the glory of his dealing destruction from the regions of peace and love.

DE BURGO, whose fame and power were considerably increased by his late successes, tempted by the hopes of new acquisitions, and encouraged by the weakness of English government, forgot his allegiance to the crown, and made war and peace by his own proper authority, as a sovereign and independent

independent chief. Limerick was made the seat of his power; from whence he first issued forth against the Irish lords of Thomond, one of whom, Connor Ruadh^r, a factious aspirer to the principality, he seized and confined; and still extending his ambitious views, proceeded to alarm the chiefs of Desmond by a vigorous incursion. After some hostilities, the authority of the clergy, together with a legate of the pope, now residing in Desmond, prevented the calamities of war. A treaty was commenced by their interposition, and speedily concluded between the Desmonians and de Burgo, who had the honour of receiving hostages from the Irish lords as a security for the due performance of their stipulations, and returned peaceably to Limerick, but soon found new employment for his enterprising genius. Cathal, the Connaught prince, who had been deposed by his arms, had still a considerable faction in his favour, and still entertained hopes of recovering his dominion. The present situation of his English allies in Meath and Ulster deprived him of all hopes of any further assistance from these quarters. O'Nial, his associate, of Tir-Owen, was in circumstances similar to his own, deposed, and now labouring to be re-established. As his last resource, he conceived the design of applying to de Burgo; with a subtilty of address, which an active temper soon learns from contention and misfortune, he laboured to detach this lord from the interests of his rival; and by flattery and promises so effectually prevailed, that he now declared against the prince whom he had but just established; and in conjunction with Cathal marched into Connaught to depose him^r. Carragh, though surprized, and ill

ill provided for defence, encountered his invaders with becoming spirit; and when overpowered by numbers, disdaining to survive the loss of royalty, fell bravely in the field. Cathal thus restored, was now to perform the promises he had lavished on his new ally. De Burgo had been too much dazzled by the hopes of large and valuable cessions in his province, to discern the insincerity of this prince; and was now confounded to find all his rapacious views utterly disappointed, and his services repaid with treachery and ingratitude. His demands were disdainfully rejected; and when he had recourse to arms for his redress, the superiour force of Cathal soon obliged him to consult his safety by a precipitate and dishonourable flight.

IN order to revenge this perfidy^r, and to retrieve the honour of his arms, de Burgo made another inroad into Connaught; but was speedily recalled to his head-quarters by the alarm of a new and formidable enemy. Meiler Fitz-Henry had by this time been enabled to raise a considerable force; and justly conceiving that it was his first duty to support the authority of his royal master against his revolted subjects of England, bent his march towards Limerick, declaring his resolution to chastise the disloyalty of its present governour. The Irish princes feared and hated de Burgo; and at the same time were justly alarmed at an appearance of vigour and activity in the English government. Cathal determined to secure himself against the revenge which he had justly provoked, by treating with Meiler, and offering his assistance against their common enemy. O'Brien of Thomond made the like tender of his services; so that

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an English governour was now, for the first time, seen at the head of the native Irish, marching against his own countrymen. Meiler thus reinforced, formed the siege of Limerick with an army which de Burgo was utterly unable to resist. He had no resource but to capitulate, and return to his allegiance. His submission was accepted, and his homage renewed; and Meiler was now at leisure to enter into a more regular and formal treaty with his new Irish associates. They had both been harassed by faction and contention in their different provinces, and therefore were the readier to seek for shelter in the protection of the English government. O'Brien made such concessions as seem to have shocked the pride of his countrymen, and gave hostages as a security for the peaceable and faithful performance of his stipulations. The concessions of Cathal were still more important. He consented to surrender two parts of Connaught to king John, and to pay one hundred marks annually for the third part^d, which he retained, and was to hold in vassalage. The king was even allowed to choose his portion in the most improved, convenient, and best inhabited parts of Connaught. At least he directs that the choice should be thus made, in his letter to Meiler Fitz-Henry, whom he invests with all the issues and profits of his portion, to be expended on fortifying and improving it *.

THE

D Archiev. Turr. Lond.

* Ex Arch. Turris Londinensis.

“ Rex &c. dilecto & fideli suo Meilero filio Henrici justiciario Hiberniæ salutem. Mandastis nobis per literas vestras & nuncios nostros & vestros, quod rex Conaciæ nobis quietas clamasset duas partes Conaciæ, ita quod tertia pars ei remaneret tenendum hereditariæ per centem marcas nobis, & hæredibus nostris inde reddendas annuatim. Et quia videtur nobis & consilio nostro hoc nobis expedire,

THE spirit of independence and disaffection which had lately appeared among the English barons of Ireland, had been excited not only by their large grants, and extensive settlements, but by the circumstances and situation of the English monarch. Like the other lords of his realm, they were neither reconciled to his succession, nor satisfied with his conduct. Readily imbibing the sentiments of their countrymen, they learned to despise the meanness of his treaty with France; they were provoked at his oppressions in England, confounded at the death of Arthur; and secure (as they supposed) by their distant situation, vented their invectives against his supposed murderer with the greater freedom and virulence*. The violent and artless temper of John de Courcey was particularly enflamed by the unhappy fate of a young prince, whose pretensions to the crown he had originally approved, and whose death he now repented in such terms of reproach, as suited his unrefined integrity. Hugh de Lacy, more flexible and temporizing, and secretly envying the growing power of this lord, seized the advantage of his indiscretion, and delated him to the king; urging the

dire, si vobis ita videtur vobis mandamus quod hoc ita fieri faciatis, ita quod eligatis illas duas partes ad opus nostrum sicut melius videritis expedire, in fide qua nobis tenemini, ubi scilicet meliores villæ & portus fuerint, & loca competentiora ad commodum nostrum, & ad fortes domos firmandas. Et de prædicto rege obsides & quascunque poteritis securitatem capiatis, quod fidelis nobis existet; & remaneat ei prædicta tertia pars Conaciæ per prædictum servitium; & efficiatis quod omnes nativi & fugitivi qui ex duabus partibus quæ nobis remanserint, exierint, revertantur cum omnibus catallis & sequela sua; & in iisdem partibus nostris castellas firmetis, & villas constituatis, & redditus affideatis, & commodum nostrum sicut melius expedire videritis faciatis. Et ad hoc faciendum, exitus ejusdem terræ, si opus fuerit, & redditus nostros capiatis, & cum nobis manderitis quid inde faceritis, secundum quod nobis mandaveritis, eidem regi cartam nostram faciemus." Teste, &c.

g Hen. Marl. Hanmer.

the danger of a revolted subject attended with a large and warlike train, in a station of considerable strength, and who, not contented with renouncing his allegiance, openly and boldly accused his sovereign as the assassin of his nephew, and rightful liege lord.

JOHN was stung with this reproach, and provoked at his revolt^y. He summoned him to repair to his presence, and do him homage. De Courcey treated his mandate with contempt; so that about the same time that Meiler Fitz-Henry was preparing to reduce de Bargo, de Lacey, and his brother Walter had commission to subdue this refractory baron, and to send him prisoner to the king. The hopes and passions of a rival were effectually gratified by this commission; which the brothers proceeded to execute with the utmost alacrity. De Lacey led on his troops, pierced into Ulster^a, and is said to have come to an engagement with de Courcey at Down, in which he was forced to retire with disgrace, and no inconsiderable loss. The Ulster lord, however, conscious that he could not long maintain a war against such forces as the English government might command, and dreading to be dispossessed of his valuable acquisitions, consented to submit and do homage to John^c, demanding a safe conduct, and giving hostages and sureties for his peaceable departure and appearance before the king. The Irish annalists mention nothing more of the transactions of these contending lords, but that Lacey compelled John de Courcey to depart from Ulster; and that he obtained the safe-conduct of Tirowen.

The

y A. D. 1203.

A 1203.

c Ann. Anon. MSS. Archiv. Tur. Lond.

The archives of the Tower furnish us with the mandate of John to the Ulster barons who had become sureties for their chief, directing them to cause him to appear and perform his service, by a term to be assigned by his lord justice of Ireland; together with the king's safe-conduct to de Courcey, and the names of the Hostages delivered on his part. But the English writers have (upon the acknowledged authority of Irish narratives) delivered a fuller, and more circumstantial detail of these transactions, and the fortunes of John de Courcey; which, romantic as it appears, shall not be passed over, as it appears to be not unworthy of some remark.

IMMEDIATELY after the defeat at Down, (as these annalists deliver) de Courcey offered the combat to Hugh de Lacey, which this lord, in respect of his commission from the king, refused to undertake against a rebellious subject; but, by proclamation, promised a large reward to those who should seize and deliver him up alive or dead. When this proved ineffectual, he in the next place practised secretly with some of the attendants and followers of de Courcey, and by bribes and promises prevailed upon them to betray their master. Having chosen their opportunity, when he was doing penance near the church of Down, unsuspecting and unarmed, they attacked and killed some of his retinue, particularly two sons of Armoric of Saint Laurence, who rose up to defend their uncle; and although de Courcey with his usual prowess seized a large wooden cross, and with this weapon killed thirteen of his assailants, yet the survivors overpowered, bound, and led him captive

captive to de Lacey; demanding the reward of their treachery. But this lord, with a generous abhorrence of such agents, ordered them to embark on board a vessel which he had provided; with a passport not to be opened until they should land; in which he related their perfidy to their master, and forbade the king's subjects to receive or protect them. Exposed to the sea without pilot and without provisions, they were at length driven into Cork; and there these wretched men were hanged by order of de Lacey.

IN the mean time John de Courcey was conveyed to England, and condemned to perpetual imprisonment: where he remained unnoticed, until a champion of Philip king of France appeared at the court of John, and proposed to assert his master's claim to Normandy, or to some castle of this province (for it is variously related) in single combat. John, mortified to find no subject of his realm prepared to encounter this boisterous challenger, is reminded that his prisoner de Courcey promised by his valour and bodily strength to prove more than equal to the French champion. De Courcey is invited to support the honour of his country: and, after repeated denials, is at length prevailed upon, not for the sake of John who had treated him so injuriously, but for the honour of his crown and kingdom, to accept the challenge. He desires his own sword to be brought from Ireland; the rigours of his confinement are softened; and his strength restored by due care and nourishment. The day of this important decision arrives: the princes and nobles of each nation are assembled in the most anxious impatience for the event: the Frenchman first appears: de Courcey prepares

with a composure and deliberation highly provoking to those who are to conduct him; to whom he observes with a sullen ease, that if any of them were invited to such a banquet, they would make no great haste: and when he at length enters the lists, the Frenchman having surveyed him minutely, and being terrified by the stern aspect, the gigantic size, and strong proportion of his antagonist, declines the combat, and flies into Spain.

THE two kings, who are said to have been witnesses of this triumph of de Courcey, now entreated him to give some proof of his bodily strength, as they had been disappointed in their expectations of his hardy combat with the Frenchman. In compliance with their desire, we are told, that he ordered a stake to be driven into the ground, on which were placed a coat of mail and helmet. Then drawing his sword, and looking with a stern and threatening aspect on the princes, he struck it through the armour so deeply into the stake, that no one but himself could draw it out. The princes expressed their astonishment not only at his vigour, but at the strange and menacing looks which he had darted at them both: to whom he answered with a rude and sullen violence, that had he missed his blow, he should have stricken off their heads. The importance of his present service atoned for these passionate expressions. John gave him his liberty, restored him to his possessions, and it is added, that on this occasion, he, at the request of de Courcey, granted to him and his heirs the privilege of standing covered in their first audience with the king of England.

To heighten the marvellous of this narrative still further, we are assured, upon the authority of the Book of Howth, that when this lord attempted to return into Ireland, he was repeatedly driven back by contrary winds, which rose in sudden gusts on every embarkation : that he was as often warned in a vision, that all his attempts to visit Ireland were vain, for that he had grievously offended, by *depriving the master*, and *setting up the servant* : and that, recollecting that he had formerly translated the church of Down dedicated to the Holy Trinity, into an abbey of black monks, consecrated to the honour of Saint Patrick ; he acknowledged his offence, retired into France, and there died.

THEY who reject the superstitious addition, have yet adopted the romantic part of this narrative without scruple ; though both evidently stand upon the same original authority. The story of the seizure and captivity of de Courcey is confuted by a public record, which agrees with the short stricture of the manuscript I have quoted, and is of infinitely more authority than the longest train of annalists and historians, each echoing the tale of his predecessor. The champion and the challenge is framed in conformity to the manners of this age, in which the rights of princes were frequently decided by single combat. But before the date of John's safe-conduct granted to de Courcey, Normandy had been lost, and even Roan, its last remaining city, abandoned by his shameful conduct. The proof of vigour, which the Ulster lord is said to have exhibited before the two kings, is equally repugnant to the tenor of authentic history. From the time of his departure from
Ireland,

Ireland, there is no period in the whole reign of John, in which these sovereigns could have held a personal conference either in France or England. The general nature and form of this narrative, the circumstantial minuteness with which it is delivered, and the poetical colouring by which it is enlivened, render it suspicious even at first view : public records detect some part of it ; the most authentic and incontestable histories of this reign destroy the credit of others, and indeed leave nothing that claims any reasonable or plausible support.

BUT it would not be worth while to detain the reader by this romantic tale, merely for the sake of refuting it, if we did not conceive it to be a specimen not unworthy of regard, of the narrative of Irish bards and romancers, and the liberties they assumed of enlarging and embellishing the real incidents of their times. They who lived in earlier times are not so easily detected. But we see with what caution we are to receive their narratives, when in times less obscure, and, when confronted by other evidence, this order of men have hazarded such bold fictions, and with such ease and such success, have obtruded the marvellous and the affecting upon their unrefined hearers, for real history. But as we find in these instances that the tales of the Irish bards were founded upon facts, we may reasonably conclude that their predecessors took the same course : that they sophisticated the truth by their additions, but were not entirely inventors. Their very fictions seem to prove that some solid foundation of true history lay at the bottom of their gaudy superstructures. The tradition of the death of earl Strongbow's son may have

have been merely the invention of a popular rhimer, but we may fairly collect from it, that the earl was rigid in his temper, and severe in his discipline : and the narrative now recited, affords an additional evidence that John de Courcey, so famous in the annals of Ireland, was robust, valiant, and boisterous, disaffected to king John, forced from Ulster by de Lacey, and obliged to surrender, and attend the king in England.

UPON the death of this lord^a, which seems to have happened soon after his departure from Ireland, (or possibly upon his first disgrace) the earldom of Ulster was granted to Hugh de Lacey, in prejudice to the claim of Milo, son of de Courcey, and one of those hostages he had sent to John.^c And this seems to prove that John de Courcey had not been reconciled to the king, nor restored to favour. On the contrary, his honours and possessions transferred to another lord, by the indiscreet and capricious bounty of the king, served to swell the pride, and raise the power of the Laceys to a formidable height. Their inveteracy against their late rival (the cause of which is not particularly explained) and their apprehensions that his posterity might at some time regain what was now bestowed on them, operated with such unrelenting severity, that a natural son of de Courcey, lord of Raheny, a district in the neighbourhood of Dublin, is said to have been assassinated by their contrivanceⁿ. And possibly their violences might have extended still further, to the father-in-law of this lord, the king of Manⁿ; for we find that about this time, he was obliged to sue to king John

^a Hanmer. Cox.

ⁿ Hanmer.

^c Arch. Turr. Lond.

ⁿ Feb. 1204-5. Rymer.

John for protection against his enemies, which he received by a formal patent, for himself, his lands, and people.

AND now, as the distresses of John required the presence and assistance of his most trusty and favourite barons, both Hugh de Lacy, and Meiler Fitz-Henry, were called into England^e, and the government of Ireland entrusted to Walter de Lacey, together with the archdeacon of Stafford, who, possibly from his function, was deemed a proper agent to solicit the subsidy which John now demanded from the clergy of Ireland, in order to enable him to oppose the progress of Philip, and to recover Normandy: a pretence which served him to harass his subjects with oppressive demands, exacted without mercy, and lavished without honour or advantage; till the ambition of pope Innocent the third roused him from that scandalous insensibility, with which he had beheld the loss of his continental dominions^a. This politic and aspiring pontiff, though, a little before the accession of king John, he had been openly and boldly opposed even by a prince of Desmond, in his attempt to confer the bishopric of Ross, yet found another opportunity of making experiment of his power in Ireland, before he declared his designs against the church and state of England.

IN most of the grants made to the English adventurers in Ireland, there was an express reservation of the donations of bishoprics and abbies to the lord of Ireland. So that on the decease of Thomas O'Connor, prelate of Armagh, king John asserted his privilege, and nominated an English-

man,

man, named Humphry de Tickhull to the see^r. But the suffragan bishops, and some clergy of the diocese, probably by the practices of a legate now resident in England, proceeded without regard to the royal mandate, to elect Eugene one of their own countrymen^a. John, incensed at this contempt of his authority, addresses an appeal to the Irish legate, against this irregular election: while Eugene in the mean time repairs to Rome, and is confirmed by the pope. The king, still more provoked, sends a peremptory mandate to the clergy of Armagh, and another directed to all the faithful in this diocese, strictly forbidding them to receive Eugene, or to acknowledge him as their prelate: and, still resolute in defence of his rights, on the death of Tickhullⁿ, nominates the archdeacon of Meath as his successor. Thus was the contest protracted for a considerable time: the clergy of Armagh adhering to the pope, and receiving Eugene; the king insisting on his privileges, and with-holding the temporalities of the see.

In this contest, the clergy had the popular favour and opinion entirely on their side; an advantage of some moment. The English competitors for the primacy had their sole reliance upon court-favour. Unnoticed in their own country they had sought that preferment in another, which they could not claim by their merits where they were better known, and obtained it by some fortunate incidents, or connections. Eugene, on the contrary, had recommended himself by a long course of exemplary conduct, which raised the utmost indignation at the pretensions of his rivals, and

and cast an odium on the opposition of John. When he repaired to England, in order to make his peace with this prince, his countrymen could not conceive that a prelate of such transcendent worth and holiness had any motive for this journey, but the welfare of the nation; and their annalists, equally prejudiced, represent him as undertaking a painful journey to the court of Englandⁿ, on purpose to lay open the irregularities of the English settlers, and to plead against their avarice and oppression.

BUT the length to which this dispute had been protracted, and the intervention of affairs much more important, operated in favour of Eugene and his pretensions, more than the superiority of his characterⁿ. Above all, three hundred marks of silver and one hundred marks of gold, presented to the king, in his necessities, without the apparent interference of the prelate, softened the violence of John, and at length prevailed upon him to invest Eugene with all the rights of the see: so that Innocent thus gained an advantage, which he took effectual care to improve in his contest about the succession to the see of Canterbury. The pride and passionate violence of John, here, bore up for a while against the resolute and determined rigour of the pontiff. His claims were received with indignation; the sentence of interdict revenged by the severest oppressions of the English clergy; and when the bishop of Exeter had with others of his brethren declared for the pope, and abandoned his diocese, the Irish prelate of Armagh, whose election the king had but just now opposed, was called into England, and entrusted with his pastoral

pastoral chargeⁿ. But the dreadful sentence of excommunication, the apparent disaffection of his subjects, and the well-grounded fear of a conspiracy, at length, so far prevailed over the king's usual indolence, that an army was raised by pillaging the miserable Jews, to give lustre to his government, and to intimidate his enemies. And as Scotland and Wales, which were first threatened, took care to avert the storm of war by a timely submission, the last pretence for affecting an appearance of vigour, and keeping up a military force, was the situation of affairs in Ireland, and the reduction of his enemies in this country.

THE present condition of Ireland was not apparently so critical and alarming as to require the immediate presence of the king and his royal army. The vigour and activity of Meiler Fitz-Henry in the southern expedition against de Burgho, had given the English interest a firmer establishment in this part of Ireland, than it had obtained for some years. Not only Limerick but Cork had been recovered^r; and a strong fort added to this latter city, which kept the Desmonians in due subjection: and the death of Daniel Mac-Arthy, their warlike chief, together with their own intestine broils, which never were suspended, weakened this people; and of consequence gave strength to the English. Measures were concerted by Meiler for adding splendor and consequence to the English government^r. At his instances, John's mandate was received for building a tower in Dublin for the security of his treasure, which the deputy was empowered to enlarge into a royal palace, if he should find it expedient: and three hundred marks, a fine due

ⁿ Ibid.

^r Ann. Innisf. MSS.

^r Archiev. Turr. Lond.

due from one of the king's barons of Ireland, were assigned towards defraying the expence^r. A dreadful plague, however, which had spread through many parts of Leinster, raged with particular violence in Dublin : and as such calamities are often aggravated by the outrages of the desperate and necessitous, the deputy received a special order to expel all robbers and plunderers from the king's lands of Ireland^a, and to execute the English laws on such delinquents. A melancholy instance of such outrages is recorded by historians^c, and hath its annual memorial continued to this day. During the festival of Easter, a time of sport and festivity, the citizens of Dublin assembled for recreation at a distance from the town, when some lawless septs issued from their mountains in the neighbourhood of Wicklow, fell with the utmost fury on this company, and slaughtered three hundred of their number. A new colony from Bristol soon supplied this loss, and exerted themselves so effectually^{*}, that their inhuman ravagers were broken and suppressed ; and the peace of the English territory restored : while the great Irish chiefs in the remoter parts of the island, still adhered to their submissions and engagements, and were considered as so faithfully and peaceably affected, that in the year 1208, when Meiler, after some interval of absence,

^r Ann. Inist. MSS.

^a Prynne.

^c Hanmer. Holingsh.

^{*} Hence it grew a custom for the magistracy and citizens to hold an annual feast upon the place where the massacre had been committed, in defiance of their invaders ; who, by a formal proclamation, were challenged to meet them in the field, or to submit to the king. To express the greater contempt of their power, this challenge and defiance were afterwards appointed to be made by the singing boys of their cathedral, as if they were sufficient to defend the city against these septs. And the choirs are annually regaled at this place, called the Wood of Cullen, and make the same ridiculous challenge, to this day.

absence, was sent to resume his government^p, John's letters of credence were addressed to the king of Connaught, and all the other kings and chiefs of Ireland. So that whatever private complaints or local contests might subsist, the king had no object considerable enough for leading an army into Ireland; and therefore, from the want of a fairer pretence, denounced his vengeance against the overgrown power of the Laceys^q, which had indeed tempted them to relax their attention and deference to John; and which, like others of their countrymen, they had exercised with an oppressive violence.

AMONG the nobles from whom John had demanded hostages, at the time when the sentence of interdict and excommunication had possessed him with the fears of a conspiracy, was William de Braosa, lord of Brecknock, who had received considerable grants in Thomond^r. To the king's messengers who came for this purpose, the wife of Braosa answered with an indiscreet and passionate severity, that her children never should be entrusted to the man who had murdered his own nephew. Vengeance was denounced against William, although he is said to have reproved his wife's intemperance, and promised obedience to the royal will. The arrears due to the king from his lands in Ireland were instantly demanded^t; and on the first default of payment orders issued to seize his lands and castles, and to secure his person. William, justly dreading the cruelty of an incensed and vindictive tyrant, fled to Ireland, with his wife and children, where they were protected by de Lacey, in defiance of the king's displeasure^u; nor was

John

John ashamed, in the meanness of his revenge, to assign the necessity of reducing this out-law and his adherents, as the reason for his expedition into Ireland.

HE arrived at Dublin in June of the year twelve hundred and ten^o: and the English writers assure us, that immediately on his landing, more than twenty Irish dynasts attended to do him homage: while his English barons Hugh and Walter de Lacey, dreading the consequences of their lawless oppression, and their embezzlement of the king's revenue, fled to France^r; where William de Braosa also sought shelter from John's resentment, leaving his wife and children still concealed in Ireland. Cathal, king of Connaught, agreeably to his former stipulations, now presented himself before Johnⁿ; and with him O'Nial, prince of Tir-Owen, who had long proved a formidable enemy to John de Courcey, and had been lately reinstated in his territory, was prevailed upon to attend the king; but not before two hostages had been given as a security for the safe-conduct of this haughty chieftain. The terms of Cathal's submission had been settled some years before, and his present purpose was but to renew his engagements. Those offered to O'Nial were apparently accepted, and the chief peaceably dismissed; but with the usual fickleness of his countrymen, he seems to have instantly repented of his submissions^r. No additional concessions of territory were made by the Irish lords of Desmond; though by the English settlements in this district, and particularly in the city of Cork, they were prevented from giving any disturbance,

disturbance, and left to slaughter each other, in their mutual dissensions". In Thomond, Murtagh O'Brien, who had submitted to Meiler, seems to have so far provoked his countrymen, by what they deemed an ignoble concession, that a new competitor was raised up against him, who deprived him of his government, and held him in captivity. And the influence of John could now extend no further, than to procure the enlargement of this subject and ally; on which condition, his rival Donald Carbragh O'Brien was allowed to enjoy the kingdom. Notwithstanding the late agreement of O'Nial with king John; yet, no sooner had he reached his own territory, than he absolutely refused to give hostages, and treated the messengers sent to demand them with an insolence and cotempt, which John passed over unnoticed, or at least unpunished. In the Chronicle of Harding, the earls of Ulster, that is, the Irish petty princes of this province, are said to have made their submissions to king John: and it is probable, that most of them consented to pay him tribute, but without investing him with their lands, resigning their sovereignties, or accepting the English laws^a. Neither was the very province of Leinster without its independent chiefs, in Ossory, in O'Fally, and other districts, who, while they gave no molestation to the English, claimed the right of administering their own petty governments, according to the old Irish laws and customs.

THE English arms, however, had by this time, penetrated into every province, and overspread the whole island with new settlements, exhibiting a specious appearance of dominion more than sufficient

frequent and embarrassing; and at present the only remedy was to resort to England for decision.

FOR the more effectual information^a, therefore, of his Irish subjects, John now came attended with men learned in the laws of their country, by whose counsel and assistance, a regular code and charter of English laws was at the general desire of his liege-men of Ireland ordained and appointed in this kingdom, and deposited, for their direction in the Exchequer of Dublin, under the king's seal, for the common benefit of the land^b, (as the public records express it) that is, for the common benefit of all who acknowledged allegiance to the crown; and for the union of the king's lands, as his subjects of both kingdoms were thus united under the same head, and the same system of polity. And for the regular and effectual execution of these laws, besides the establishment of the king's courts of judicature in Dublin, there was now made a new and more ample division of the king's lands of Ireland into counties, where sheriffs and other officers, were appointed. Historians generally enumerate twelve such counties established by John; Dublin, Meath, Kildare, Argial now called Lowth, Katherlagh, Kilkenny, Wexford, Waterford, Cork, Kerry, Limerick,* Tipperary: which marks the extent of the English territory as confined to a part of Leinster and of Munster, and to those parts of Meath and Argial which lye in the province of Ulster, as now defined. And this division seems to accord with the Irish annals, in proving that the chiefs in the remoter districts of Ulster had not given John the dominion of their lands. As Cathal had made so absolute a resignation of two

parts

^a Rot. Pat. 11 Hen. III.

^b Rot. 30. Hen. III.

cient for the mean and illiberal vanity of John; who, imagining that his power was employed to purposes of sufficient dignity, while he exterminated some inconsiderable sects of marauders immediately round his seat of government, and struck a general terror by the severity of his executions, enjoyed the state and consequence of a sovereign lord, and projected schemes of improvement and legislation.

HENRY the second, by his stipulations with those English lords who had first adventured into Ireland, guarded against their growing power, and the danger of erecting themselves into independent sovereigns, by obliging them to do homage and fealty to him and his successors. And at the same time that he thus secured their allegiance, the agreement on his part was equitable and reasonable, that they should, in their new settlements, enjoy the advantages of their former civil constitution, and still be governed as his subjects by the laws of England. But the dispositions, made by him for this purpose, were necessarily imperfect and inaccurate from his short residence in Ireland, and the more pressing objects of his attention. It doth not appear that any code or charter had been provided by Henry, or assigned for the direction of his Irish subjects; who were bred to arms, many of them illiterate, and probably, none perfectly informed in the system by which they were to be governed^r. Many who held lands from the crown, were even ignorant of the nature of their tenure, and the manner in which their service should be performed. In cases more difficult and critical, doubts and controversies must have been frequent

parts of his province, it seems not easy to assign the reason why no county was established in Connaught. If there was such an omission, (which is scarcely to be supposed upon the authority of very inaccurate writers) it was in some time after supplied; for in the reign of Edward the first^r, there are records which mention the sheriff of Connaught, and the sheriff also of Roscommon, as a distinct county; nor must it be omitted, that in a patent of the same reign, we have mention of the county of Desmond.

WHILE John was engaged in the regulation of his Irish government, those barons, who had fled from his resentment, were reduced to the utmost distresses. Matilda, the wife of William de Braosa, soon found that Ireland could not afford her a secure retreat; and, flying into Scotland, was there seized by one of John's agents, and with her family conveyed back again, to answer for the offences of her husband, or rather to bear the punishment of her own intemperanceⁿ. As she could not pay the exorbitant demands of arrears claimed from her husband's lands in Munster, she and her children were sent prisoners to the castle of Bristol. William, alarmed at the situation of his family, returned to England, endeavoured to make his peace with John; but, as this could not be effected, he was again obliged to retire^r. The lady is also said to have addressed herself to the queen, and attempted to purchase her mediation, by an extraordinary present from her Irish demesnes, of four hundred kine, all milk-white, except the ears, which were red. But the avarice and malignity

malignity of John were not so easily appeasedⁿ. The unhappy mother, with her unoffending children were still confined, and are said to have perished in their prison by want. Such severe representations of the conduct of king John, we may reasonably suspect to be heightened and aggravated by the monkish historians. In the present case, at least, we are not to suppose that his cruelty extended to the utter destruction of the whole family of Braosaⁿ; for Lucia, the grand-daughter of this lord, who was married to an English baron called Geoffry de Canville, was at length restored to the lands given to her by her grandfather.

THE Laceys were more fortunate in extricating themselves from their present difficulties^r. They are said to have been reduced even to engage in the menial employment of gardeners to the abbot of St. Taurin^o; a circumstance by no means improbable; as Philip de Comines was witness of some of the noblest lords of England degraded by their misfortunes to the condition of lacquies, during the contests of York and Lancaster. The demeanour of these new servants, soon convinced their employer, that they could not be men of ordinary rank; which led him to a strict enquiry into their fortunes: and this produced, on their part a full confession of their real state and quality, and the occasion of their present difficulties. The good abbot is so affected by their story, that he becomes intercessor with the king in behalf of his offending subjects; and to his mediation it is imputed, that John was finally prevailed upon to

VOL. I.

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reinstate

ⁿ Matth. Par. ^d Collectanea autographa Waræi. MSS.

^r Hammer.

^o Speed. Book of Howth

reinstate the Laceys in their possessions, on condition of receiving from Walter 2,500 marks for Meath; and from Hugh, 4,000 marks for Ulster. It is added, that these lords were by no means ungrateful to their benefactor. They knighted his nephew, and invested him with a considerable lordship in Ireland. Several of his monks also were persuaded to attend them on their return, and met with a favourable reception and establishment in their territories.

THE reduction of the forts belonging to these lords in Meath and Ulster^r, is the only military exploit we can ascribe to John during a three months residence in Ireland. The English historians indeed assure us that he reduced the king of Connaught by force of arms. But public records prove that this prince made a peaceable submission; and confirm the representations of the Irish annals. And when we know that he discovered the basest supineness, upon the most important occasions, we are the less surprized to find Hugh O'Nial, a petty Irish prince, at the very time when John was marching through his territory^a, boldly defying his power, and renouncing his sovereignty, without the least attempt made to reduce a chief who by his conduct violated his solemn engagements.

UPON the departure of the king^r, the administration of his government in Ireland was committed to John de Grey, bishop of Norwich, who, agreeably to his instructions, caused money to be new coined, of the same weight with that of England, for the convenience of traffic between the two kingdoms, and which by royal proclamation

was

was made current in England as well as Ireland. And this prelate is said to have administered his government with such vigour, that, instead of living in any awe or fear of the disaffected^a, he was enabled at the time when England was threatened by an invasion from the king of France, in order to execute the pope's sentence of deposition, to send a company of knights with three hundred well-appointed infantry from Ireland, to the assistance of his royal master. And indeed, though Ireland was by no means in a state of general tranquillity, yet its disorders were principally confined to those districts most remote from the seat of English government^x. Hugh O'Nial, in Ulster, was the declared enemy of the English. But the garrisons on his frontiers were left to encounter him; and although he gained repeated advantages over them, yet he had not strength sufficient for an extensive irruption. Without assistance or confederates, he could but harass the enemy by occasional excursions, returning to his own territory, and there enjoying the honour of his petty victories. His neighbouring chieftains, like the Desmondians in the opposite quarter of the island, were employed in rising each other. In Desmond, indeed, the disorders sometimes required the interposition of the English stationed in Corke^o: and the severities they executed on those who attempted to molest their settlements, (as the Irish annalists represent them) plainly shew, that they had by this time imbibed but too much of the ferocity of their neighbours, if not of their treacherous and vindictive spirit.

BUT besides the disorders arising from provincial or local factions, there were others proceeding from the liberal grants made by the crown, the claims of the new settlers, and the opposition of the old natives. The lands ceded in Connaught seem to have been the occasion of particular contest: the English being anxious to improve their grants to the utmost, and frequently encroaching beyond their just bounds; the Irish natives clamouring at their usurpations, and flying to their own chieftain for redress. Cathal, who had lost his consequence, could but appeal to the justice of the English government. The oppressors of his vassals were of consequence incensed against their advocate. His remonstrances they affected to impute to his disloyalty, and represented his zeal for the interest of the natives as an overture to rebellion. This degraded prince, essentially injured, and, at the same time, unjustly maligned, threatened with hostilities, and unprovided for defence, had no resource but in the power of John, to whose protection he had a rightful claim; and to whom he was now obliged to sue with all the humility of a dependent vassal, who, but a few years before, had bidden defiance to the whole English power, and threatened to exterminate the foreigners from every quarter of the kingdom^r. John, who probably was well informed of the injurious attempts made upon this prince and his reserved domain, by letters patent directed to his lord justice, officers, or other faithful subjects in Ireland, granted his protection to Cathal, directing that he should be supported and defended, that no injury should be offered to him, either in his person, or possessions; and that no unfavourable suggestions of his enemies

enemies should be received or believed, so long as he adhered to his allegiance and attachment to the king. It seems to have been considered as a point of sound policy, to take every method of conciliating the affections of those chiefs who had become foedaries to John. They had been turbulent enemies, were hardly reconciled, and from a long experience of the national temper, it was found, that they were to be retained most effectually by an appearance of kindness, attention, and respect^r. Among other means used for this purpose, the patent now granted to Cathal was attended with an order addressed to the archbishop of Dublin, to buy such a quantity of scarlets as he should judge sufficient to make robes to be presented to the kings of Ireland, and others of the king's liege-men, natives of this kingdom. Probably these robes were made after the English mode. If so, it was by no means a contemptible device, to endeavour to habituate these chiefs to the English garb, and by their example, to render it fashionable in their territories. "Men's apparel," saith Spencer^r, speaking of this country and its manners, "is commonly made according to their conditions; and their conditions are oftentimes governed by their garments: for the person that is gowned, is by his gowne put in mind of gravity; and also restrained from lightnes, by the very unaptnesse of his weed." And the gentler and less offensive method of introducing an advantageous change of apparel, gradually and imperceptibly, under the appearance of grace and favour, had it been pursued with steadiness and address, might have proved more effectual than the penal laws of later times: which, by an avowed and violent

violent opposition to the manners of the Irish, proved too odious to be executed.

THE archbishop above-mentioned, was Henry de Londres^r, who succeeded to John Comyn in the year 1213, and was now invested with the king's government of Ireland; which was, however, for the most part administered by his deputy Geoffry Morris, or de Maurisco, an eminent English settler in Munster. Henry himself was obliged to attend the service of his royal master in England, and is an instance of a prelate in the Irish church, admitted to the king's councils, and acting as a spiritual baron of his realm, in John's most important transactions^r. When his contest with pope Innocent ended in his shameful submission, the prelate of Dublin is named first of those lords who were present at the execution of the deed, by which John resigned the kingdoms of England and Ireland to the see of Rome, and consented to hold them as a fief, by the service of one thousand marks to be paid annually, seven hundred for England; and for Ireland, three hundred. He was present when John did homage to Pandolf, with all the odious circumstances of humiliation^p; and was honourably distinguished on this occasion, as the only prelate who ventured to express his indignation at this shameful transaction, and the enormous insolence and haughtiness of the legate^v. It is immediately pertinent to the present subject to observe, that soon after the arrival of the bishop of Frescati in England, attended with a letter of credence from the pope, conceived in the most horrid terms of blasphemous hypocrisy, and

^r Ware de Pr. 1214. ^y Matth. Par. Arch. Tuer. Lond. Matt. Par.
ⁿ Matth. Par. ^u Epist. Innoc. Baluzio ed.

and when John had made a second resignation of his kingdoms, Innocent, with an audacious ostentation of favour and condescension to his royal vassal, addressed a letter to the prelates, princes, lords, and people of Ireland, notifying the total reconciliation made by the blessing of Heaven between the royal state of England and the holy see^r; expressing the tenderest concern for his beloved son in Christ the illustrious king John, whose realms, by his grant, were rightfully invested in the Roman church; and commanding and directing them by his apostolic mandate, to persevere in their allegiance to the king and his heirs, who were now the objects of his paternal care and favour.

THESE transactions were succeeded by the famous contest between John and his barons. And here again, we find the archbishop of Dublin admitted to the king's councils, attending the congress of Runimede, encamped on the king's side, with the few lords who still appeared to adhere to him, and taking place immediately after the archbishop of Canterbury. In the preamble to the Great Charterⁿ, he is mentioned as one of those prelates and barons by whose counsel it is alledged to have been granted. With the other prelates, he protested, on occasion of a clause in this charter, by which it was apprehended that the being of all forests might be endangered, and joined in declaring the real intention of both partiesⁿ. In like manner, he is united with the prelates of England, in a protest against the refusal of the barons to certify their submission and allegiance by an instrument under their seals. But although this prelate, and

William

^r Ibid.

ⁿ Mag. Cart. Johan.

ⁿ Archiv. Turr. Lond.

William earl Marshal, a baron of great weight and extensive property in Ireland, were both attendant on the king, and intimates in his councils, it doth not appear upon this great occasion, that any particular requisitions were made in behalf of his subjects in Ireland, or any measures taken for including them specifically in the present grants of the crown. But when the turbulent and distracted reign of John ended in the succession of an infant heir, the Irish lords thought this a favourable period for explaining their grievances, and petitioning the throne for new graces^r. For this purpose, they made use of the intervention of Ralph of Norwich, one of the king's chaplains. Among their complaints, were those of the late severities exercised by John towards some of his barons, and his violent seizure of their lands; and among their demands, was one of great consequence, and which, if obtained, might have proved of singular advantage to the English interest; that either the queen dowager, or the king's brother, should be sent to reside in Ireland. "The people of this land," saith Davyes, "both English and Irish, out of a natural pride, did ever love and desire to be governed by great persons."—And at this particular period, when the acrimony of the natives was sensibly abated, the presence of a royal personage promised to have the happiest influence; and seems to have been desired, from a thorough knowledge of the Irish character, and a full conviction of its utility. The answer of king Henry the third deserves a place in the body of this history; and is, therefore, here translated from the original.

THE

“ THE King”, to Geoffry de Maurisco, Justiciary
“ of Ireland, greeting.

“ WE return our manifold thanks, for your
“ good and faithful service performed to
“ John, late king of England, our father, of
“ blessed memory, and to us to be continued, and
“ for those things you have signified to us, by our
“ trusty Ralph of Norwich, clerk.

“ SEEING then, that by his will, in whose
“ hands are the issues of life and death, our lord
“ and father hath happily departed this life, (whose
“ soul may the heavens receive !) We will you to
“ know, that, the royal obsequies being first so-
“ lemnly and duly performed in the church of the
“ blessed Mary of Winchester, there were con-
“ vened at Gloucester the greater number of the
“ nobles of our realm, bishops, abbots, earls, and
“ barons, who adhered faithful and devoted to
“ our father during his lifetime, and very many
“ others : where, on the feast of the apostles
“ Simon and Jude, in the church of Saint Peter,
“ Gloucester, with the acclamations of the clergy
“ and laity, we were, by the hands of the lord
“ Gualon, by the title of St. Martin, presbyter,
“ cardinal and legate of the apostolic see, and
“ those of the bishops then present, with invo-
“ cation of the Holy Spirit, publicly anointed,
“ and crowned king of England ; fealty and ho-
“ mage being of all performed to us. Which we
“ have judged necessary to communicate to you as
“ our liege subject, that you may share the joy of
“ our honour and happy success.

“ AND

“ AND whereas we have heard that some resent-
 “ ment hath arisen between our lord and father
 “ aforesaid, and certain nobles of our realm ; and
 “ for some time subsisted ; whether with cause or
 “ without cause, we know not ; our pleasure is,
 “ that it should be for ever abolished and forgot-
 “ ten, so as never to remain in our mind ; and in
 “ order that the effect may cease with the removal
 “ of the cause, whatever resentment was con-
 “ ceived, or subsisted against him, we are ready
 “ and willing to the utmost of our power, to
 “ atone for, by yielding to all persons what reason
 “ shall suggest, and the good counsel of our sub-
 “ jects direct, abolishing all evil usages from our
 “ realm, and by the restoration of liberties and
 “ free customs, so as to recal the gracious days of
 “ our ancestors, granting to all our subjects what
 “ each may fairly and reasonably claim. For this
 “ purpose know ye, that a council being lately
 “ convened at Bristol, in which were present all
 “ the prelates of England, as well bishops and
 “ abbots as priors, and many, as well earls as
 “ barons, they did homage and fealty to us, pub-
 “ licly, and generally ; and receiving a grant of
 “ those liberties and free customs first demanded
 “ and approved by them, departed in joy, ready
 “ and willing to do our service, each to his parti-
 “ cular residence.

“ WE further hope, and trust in the Lord, that
 “ the state of our realm, shall, by the divine mercy,
 “ be changed considerably for the better.

“ As to sending our lady the queen-mother, or
 “ our brother, into Ireland, our answer is, that
 “ taking the advice and assent of our faithful sub-
 “ jects,

“ jects, we shall do that which shall be expedient
“ to our interest and the interest of our realm.

“ WE therefore desire you our beloved, that as
“ you have been faithful and devoted to John our
“ father, of blessed memory, so you may be the
“ more careful to continue in fidelity to us, as you
“ know that in this our tender age we have the
“ more occasion for your assistance and counsel;
“ and that you receive the homage of the princes
“ of Ireland, and all others who ought to do it
“ unto us.

“ We retain at our court Ralph of Norwich,
“ that by his means, we may signify our pleasure
“ to you, more fully, in these and other matters.
“ And our pleasure is, that you and our other
“ faithful subjects of Ireland shall enjoy the same
“ liberties which we have granted to our subjects
“ of England; and these we will grant and con-
“ firm to you.”

THE grant to his other subjects, here alluded to, was the Charter of Liberties executed on the twelfth of November, in the first year of this prince's reign^r; when, at a great council, held at Bristol, and composed of prelates, nobility, and others, in great numbers, the pope's legate absolved them from their oath of allegiance to prince Louis, who had been invited to support them against the treachery of John, and obliged them to swear fealty to young Henry: who in return, formally and solemnly renewed the Great Charter granted by his father, with such alterations and amendments as the circumstances of the times had made necessary.

AMONG

τ Ann. Waver. Rob. Glouc.

AMONG the nobles assembled on this occasion, and members of the king's great councilⁿ, we find the name of Walter de Lacy, an Irish baron lately restored to favour, and reinstated in his possessions. Such were the condescensions paid to this great familyⁿ, that the king addressed a letter particularly to Hugh, intreating him to forget all former animosities, and assuring him of his future favour and protection. The royal grace was also extended to the whole body of Irish subjects. And on the sixth of February after signing the English charter, a duplicate was transmitted to Ireland under the seals of the legate, and William, earl of Pembroke, the protector, for the benefit of the king's faithful subjects in this kingdom, and with those alterations only which the local necessities of Ireland required. It still remains extant in the Red Book of the Exchequer at Dublin: it was attended by the following letter from king Henry.

“ THE king to all archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls, barons, knights, and free tenants^y, and all our faithful subjects settled throughout Ireland. Greeting.

“ WITH our hearty commendation of your
 “ fidelity in the Lord, which you have
 “ ever exhibited to our lord father, and to us in
 “ these our days are to exhibit, our pleasure is,
 “ that in token of this your famous and notable
 “ fidelity, the liberties granted by our father, and
 “ by us, of our grace and gift, to the realm of
 “ England, shall in our kingdom of Ireland, be
 “ enjoyed by you and by your heirs for ever.
 “ Which liberties, distinctly reduced to writing
 “ by

“ by the general counfel of all our liege fubjects,
“ we tranfmit to you, fealed with the feals of our
“ lord Gualon, legate of the apoftolical fee;
“ and of our trufty earl William Marifhal, our
“ governor, and the governor of our kingdom;
“ becaufe, as yet, we have no feal. And the
“ fame fhall in procefs of time, and on fuller
“ counfel, receive the fignature of our own feal.
“ Given at Gloucefter the fixth day of February.”

THUS were the rights and privileges of the Irifh fettlers completely afcertained and eftablifhed. They were not only to be governed by the fame monarchs, and the fame laws with their ancestors, but to complete their union with their fellow-fubjects in England, they are now included in the confeffions extorted from the throne, to circumfcribe the prerogative, and correct the feverities gradually introduced by the foedal fyftem: they appear in the fame honourable light with their brethren in the neighbouring realm, making the fame requifitions, and obtaining the fame grants which are to this day revered as the bafis of Englifh liberty. But if the requifition of the Englifh charters proceeded rather from an ariftocratic fpirit, than the love of true liberty, the fame fpirit, it muft be acknowledged, was ftill more predominant in Ireland: where the barons, remote from the fupreme feat of majefty, uncontrouled by a delegated authority too often weak and ill-fupported, invefted with enormous territories and dangerous privileges, were tempted by their ftrength, and enabled by the fituation of the kingdom, to purfue the objects of their avarice and ambition, without regard to juftice, and fometimes without even the appearance of refpect to government. As

the same passions possessed them all, they of consequence lived with each other in a perpetual state of rivalry, envy, and dissension : and as their claims were to be supported by force of arms, their own vassals, as well as the native Irish, felt the severest consequences of their pride and oppression. Odious as such representations may appear, they will be found but too fully justified in the progress of this history. And it may be no useless task, distinctly to point out the source of those calamities under which the nation groaned for so long a period, and to exhibit those facts in full view, which prove that they were originally derived from the vices of individuals, not from any inequitable or oppressive principles in English government.



B O O K II.

C H A P. I.

State of Ireland during the first years of the reign of Henry the third.—Henry de Londres sent into Ireland.—His conduct.—Death of the earl of Pembroke.—Contest between his successor and the Lacies.—Grants made by Henry.—Commotions in Connaught.—Ambition of de Burgho.—Opposed by Fedlim prince of Connaught.—His spirit.—His application to the king.—Death of William Marishal.—Richard his successor suspected by the king.—Assisted in Ireland.—Is invested with his lands and dignities.—Opposes the administration of the bishop of Winchester.—Retires to Wales.—Confederates with Lewellin.—Fruitless attempts to reduce him.—The minister projects a scheme to destroy him.—Letter to the lords of Ireland.—Earl Richard's arrival in this kingdom.—Insidious practices of Geoffry de Maurisco.—Expeditions of Richard.—He treats with the lords of Ireland.—Is betrayed.—His tragical death.—Effects of this incident.—Meanness of the king.—Disgrace of Winchester.—Commotions in Ireland on the death of Richard.—Maurice Fitzgerald seeks a reconciliation with his successor.—Fedlim repairs to the king.—His success.—Irish toparchs invited to assist the king in his intended expedition into Scotland.—Complicated disorders of Ireland.—Henry obliged repeatedly to enforce the observance of the English laws.—The benefits of these laws sued for by some particulars.—But denied to the Irish in general.—True cause of this exclusion.—Grant of the lordship of Ireland to

prince Edward.—This kingdom deprived of the advantages of his abilities.—Commutations in the North.—In Desmond.—The Geraldines depressed.—Recover their power.—Quarrel with de Burgho.—Maurice seizes and imprisons the chief governor.—Who is enlarged by an assembly convened at Kilkenny.—Excesses of de Burgho.—Defeated by Ædh O'Connor.—Exactions of the king.—Those of the pope still more oppressive.—Remonstrances of the Irish clergy against the admission of foreigners into their church.—Equally averse to the English as to the Italians.—Their remarkable ordinance against the English clergy.—Rescinded by the pope.—Irish clergy endeavour to enlarge the jurisdiction of their courts.—Statute of Merton.—Insolence of the Irish ecclesiastics.—They excommunicate the magistrates and citizens of Dublin.—Who appeal to the council.—Ridiculous meanness of their submission.

A PERIOD of almost fifty years from the arrival of the British adventurers in Ireland, hath hitherto afforded a succession of events which may give occasion to some useful reflections, and seem not unworthy of a fairer and more distinct exposition than they have hitherto received. As we advance, it will be sometimes found necessary to confine ourselves to a more general view of the affairs of Ireland, without an exact adherence to the order of time, and without dwelling on particulars which neither interest nor instruct. The writers of the History of England have been obliged to adopt this method, in treating of the particular period to which we are now arrived. In the present work it is still more allowable, for reasons too obvious to be explained; even if the monkish

annalists of Ireland, or the public records during the long reign of Henry the third had afforded more historical materials.

THE gradual progress of the English power had by this time considerably weakened that of the old Irish chieftains; whose dominions had been circumscribed, and their national vanity mortified, by their concessions to the crown of England*. It was now only a few of their most distinguished characters that their annalists could extol as *the terror of the Gauls* (so the English are stiled) *and destroyers of their castles, who never once paid tribute or submission to the foreigners.* They were reduced to an humble style, and in the utmost warmth of panegyric, could but represent their hero as *yielding to the English, only what was just and right*†. Some inconsiderable disorders in the North were soon repelled by the English settlers of this district, and the fall of some turbulent chieftains served to strike new terror, and check the progress of commotion. The English, who saw the government of the young king and realm of England administered with abilities and vigour by William Marshal earl of Pembroke, a nobleman of vast possessions in Ireland, and of consequence attached to their interests, were encouraged by the expectation of his support, and at the same time restrained by the authority of his station and character, from all irregularities, of which they were sensible he would be faithfully informed. So that the first year of Henry's reign passed undistinguished by any events in Ireland worthy of note: the Irish foedaries confining themselves, for the most part, to their own districts, the English conducting

Vol. I.

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ducting

* Ann. Innisf. MSS. & Ann Var. † Ann. Anon. MSS. A. D. 1218

ducting their government, and managing their interests without disorder or interruption^r. Geoffry de Maurisco was continued in the administration, and Henry de Londres, the prelate of Dublin, was sent into Ireland under the pretence of assuming his pastoral charge, but really as coadjutor to Geoffry. The king's letter addressed to his liegebarons of Ireland expresses the reluctance with which he parted with this prelate, and how necessary his presence and counsels were to him and the realm of England; directing them to consult with him and the chief governor, in every thing pertaining to the regulation of the kingdom.

AND although this prelate was chiefly distinguished by his political conduct, yet in his ecclesiastical character, he exerted himself with sufficient abilities. Soon after his arrival he held a synod at Dublin^p, the constitutions of which are still extant, and do no dishonour to the temper and principles of de Londres. But his private conduct, if we may believe the Irish relaters, was insolent and odious^a. We are told that he summoned the tenants of his see to produce the instruments by which they held their lands, which he had no sooner received under pretence of examining their titles, than in an affected passion he cast them into the fire. The first fit of astonishment at this impudent treachery was succeeded by a violent tumult, in which some of the bishop's domestics were grievously wounded: he himself was saved only by flight, and to allay the commotion, found it necessary to confirm their tenures to the aggrieved parties. Nor could this condescension efface the odium of his

^r Rymer. Prynn.
^a Hammer,

^p Reg. Græge Mihi. Wilkins. Conc.

his attempt. He was branded with the name of Burn-Bill, and ever after known by this appellation ; a circumstance which seems to confirm the truth of this incident. And it is a striking example of the contempt with which the rights of the subject in Ireland were, in these times, treated by the more powerful of the neighbouring kingdom.

THE death of the great earl of Pembroke in the year 1219, deprived Ireland of an useful and powerful patron : from this period, at least, her disorders seem to have revived. Hugh de Lacey, whose avarice and ambition had not been suppressed by his misfortunes, deemed this incident favourable to his purposes, and commenced a contest about some lands which the earl had possessed, and which Hugh now claimed as his right. As the grants made to these English lords had raised them to a degree of sovereignty, and as they assumed the power of making war and peace, independent of the English government, de Lacey knew full well that the dispute must finally be brought to the decision of the sword^r: and to be the better provided for this event, he courted the alliance of O'Nial, the turbulent chieftain of the North, and the avowed enemy of his liege-lord. William the young earl was suddenly called into Ireland to defend his lands : Leinster and Meath were exposed to the calamities of war, by the incursions of these lords, who as each prevailed, pursued his adversary, and laid his territories waste. Trim, the principal city of Meath, was besieged by William^e, and with difficulty maintained. Leinster, on the other hand^d, was harrassed by O'Nial, till the contending parties were wearied

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out

out into an accommodation, or at least a suspension of hostilities.

GEOFFRY, the English governour, was in the mean time obliged to make an expedition into Desmond, to suppress the insurrection of the Mac-Arthys^p; and terrified the country by the severity of his execution. Donald O'Brien of Thomond, amidst these storms was solicitous to secure his own domain from the rapine of his countrymen, and the oppressive violence of the English, and as the most effectual methodⁿ, petitioned and obtained a grant from king Henry, of the kingdom of Thomond, (as it is called) to be held of the king during his minority, by a yearly rent of 'one hundred pounds, and a fine of one thousand marks. With less equity, and less attention to the tranquility of the kingdomⁿ, Henry also granted to Richard de Burgho, representative of that lord who had proved so dangerous in the reign of John, the whole kingdom of Connaught after the death of Cathal the bloody-handed, who still maintained his state in this province. It doth not appear whether the present grant was reconcileable to the stipulations formerly made with Cathal. But as Hubert de Burgho, justiciary of England, and governour of the king, was now in the meridian of his power, it is probable that his kinsman was gratified, without a scrupulous attention to the claims of an Irish chieftain little known or regarded in the court of England.

THE death of Cathal^r soon gave Richard an opportunity to plead his grant. But the Irish, according to their own customs^v, proceeded to elect a successor :

^p Ann. Innisf. MSS. ⁿ Rymer. Davys. ^h Pat. 3 Hen. III. Davys.
^x A. D. 1223. ^v Ann. Anon. MSS.

successor: and by the powerful intercession of O'Nial, Tirlaugh, brother of the late prince, was invested with the royal dignity of Connaught. A nomination procured by the open and inveterate opposer of the English government, and supported by his arms, was particularly offensive to Geoffry de Maurisco. He led an army into Connaught, but without attempting directly to support de Burgho in his claims, contented himself with expelling Tirlaugh, and established Ædh, a son of Cathal, in his room. The usual subject of contention in this disordered province was thus revived. The successor grew insolent^r, was provoked by the demands made upon his territory by the English, resisted them by force, was supported by his countrymen, and proved so successful as to take a son of Geoffry prisoner, who seems to have marched with an inconsiderable force to oppose him. Being soon reduced to extremity, he was obliged to come in person to treat with the governour: when a dissention arising between some of his Irish train and the domestics of Geoffry, Ædh was unhappily killed in the tumult*. His uncle and rival reassumed the sovereignty, but was soon deposed by Richard de Burgho, who succeeded Maurisco in the government, and deemed it more consistent with his views, to invest another son of Cathal called

^r Ann. Anom. MSS.

* It is scarcely worthy of notice that the death of this prince is variously related. Some annalists tell us that the wife of one of the governour's attendants entertained him with particular kindness, prepared a bath to refresh him, and was assiduous in all the little offices and attentions of an hospitable matron. Ædh, after the manner of his own country, expressed his gratitude by kissing his benefactress. In this act, which possibly was rendered more suspicious by an artless unpolished warmth of affection, he was surprized by her husband, who in a violent rage of jealousy determined to destroy him, and effected his purpose by a treacherous assassination. Geoffry was just enough to execute the law of England on the offender.

called Fedlim, with the royal title. This chief, more vigorous and politic than his immediate predecessors, had the spirit to oppose the claims made on his territory by de Burgho, in a manner the more peremptory and imperious, as he was now in the plenitude of power. Impatient of opposition from his creature, he denounced the terrors of his vengeance against him, commenced hostilities, and even made him captive. Yet Fedlim had the good fortune to escape, collected a considerable body of his adherents, marched against his rival now supported by the English governour, defeated, slew him, and re-assumed his sovereignty.

HAPPILY for this Irish prince^r, Hubert was now in disgrace ; his kinsman was, of consequence, removed from his government, and Maurice Fitz-Gerald appointed his successor, in return for the services of his noble family. Fedlim, with a sagacity not unusual to his countrymen, determined to improve this favourable conjuncture^r. Sensible that he could not long support his dignity by any power of his own, he addressed himself to the king of England. In a submissive and affecting manner, he represented his own inviolable attachment as well as that of his father to the English government ; the great and valuable cessions they had made, which yet were not capable of satiating the avarice of a disloyal baron, who had seized the king's forts, made war upon his vassals, and aimed at a degree of power inconsistent with his allegiance, and dangerous to the interests of his liege lord ; earnestly entreating permission to repair to England, to cast himself at the king's feet, that he might explain more particularly his

own

own cruel injuries, as well as the enormities of his enemy de Burgho.

HENRY could not but feel surprize at an application which so little accorded with the accounts of Irish transactions received at his court. He had been assured * that the late disorders of Connaught had proceeded from a general rebellion of the native Irish; that, led by the chief of Connaught, a declared enemy to his royal authority, they had entered the king's lands with fire and sword; that his faithful barons had risen up, repelled the invasion, pursued the enemy to their head-quarters, where, by their address and valour, Fedlim had been defeated with the loss of twenty thousand men. Alarmed at the reports of the insolence and power of de Burgho, and taught to dread the excesses of a discontented baron, but at the same time doubting the representations of the Irish chief, he resolved to act with caution. § He addressed

* This account is found in Matth. Paris, who probably received it on the authority of some artful intelligence sent into England, without considering or knowing the absurdity of it. The monk was so ill informed, that he makes this stupendous victory to have been gained by Geoffry the chief governor, a considerable time after Geoffry was removed from the government of Ireland. V. pag. 366. Ed. Watts, 1640.

g Rymer. Ch. 17 H. III. —

§ “ Rex dilecto & fideli suo Mauricio Filio Gerardi Justiciarii suo
“ Hiberniæ, salutem.

“ Significavit nobis dilectus & fidelis noster F. filius carissimi
“ quondam regis Connac, quod proposuit ad nos venire in Angliam,
“ causa nos videndi & nobiscum loquendi de negotiis nostris & suis,
“ Et nos renunciavimus ei, quod, ante adventum suum, laboret de
“ consilio vestro, ad captionem castri de Miloc quod est in manu
“ Ricardi de Burgo; & cum dictum castrum captum fuerit & vobis
“ commissum, et terra Connac sedata & vobis fuerit liberata, bene
“ placet nobis, & volumus quod ad nos veniat in Angliam, simul
“ cum nunciis vestris quos ad nos mittetis in Angliam.

“ His igitur, ut prædictum est expeditis, saluum & securum
“ conductum præfato F. habere faciatis, causa veniendi ad nos in

addressed a letter to Maurice Fitz-Gerald, in which he informed him of the application of his liege-man, son of the late king of Connaught; that in answer to his petition for a safe-conduct, he had recommended that his journey to England should be deferred, until he had, with the concurrence of his chief governour, endeavoured to reduce the castle of Melick, now in possession of de Burgho, the detention of which, probably had been represented as a striking instance of the disloyalty of this baron; that, when this should be effected, and the province of Connaught peaceably settled and delivered to the king's deputy, he had declared his readiness to grant his petition, and admit him to his presence. At the same time Fitz-Gerald is directed that some trusty agents, on whose discretion he could rely, should be sent over with the Irish prince, who might inform the king authentically of the real state and condition of Ireland, that he might not be deceived by interested reports, or the suggestions of jealousy and envy. This answer was sufficient for the immediate purpose of Fedlim. He was acknowledged as the king's liege-man; he had the royal commission to act against de Burgho; and his countrymen were deterred from any factious attempts against a chieftain who boasted the support of the English monarch. So that he enjoyed his petty sovereignty for a time, unmolested by any Irish rivals, or English claims; while another and a more important object engaged the attention of the great barons in

“ Angliam, in cujus etiam adventu nuncios vestros cum eo mittatis,
 “ viros videlicet discretos qui de statu terræ nostræ Hiberniæ nos
 “ sciant & velint significare. Teste meipso apud Teokisbir, 28vo
 “ die Máii, anno regni nostri decimo septimo.” Rymer, tem. i.
 v. 328.

in Ireland, and involved the kingdom in considerable disorder and confusion.

ON the death of William Marishal^d, son to the protector, his estates and honours devolved on his brother Richard, a young lord actuated with all the bold and independent spirit of an English baron. Both the king, and Hubert who was now in power, were acquainted with his dispositions, and dreaded their effects : so that when he came to demand possession of his lands, it was at first denied, on pretence that his brother's wife was pregnant. When this device proved ineffectual, it was, in the next place, alledged that Richard had held a treasonable correspondence with the king's enemies in France ; and therefore he was commanded to depart from the realm within fifteen days, on pain of perpetual imprisonment. Without the least hesitation or delay, he bent his course to Ireland, where his family was held in the utmost reverence. Descended by his mother's side from an Irish king, by his father's from the renowned Strongbow, he was equally dear to the inhabitants of Leinster, both of the Irish and English race. He was readily invested with his lands and castles, received the homage of his vassals, and collecting a considerable force from Ireland, possessed himself of the castle of Pembroke, as if resolved to assert his patrimonial claims by arms : a conduct which wrought so forcibly on the timidity and inconstancy of the king, that he consented to accept his homage and fealty, and to invest him peaceably with all his rights.

IT

IT soon appeared that Henry's apprehensions of the dangerous spirit of this lord were but too well founded. When the administration had been unhappily committed to the prelate of Winchester, and the land groaned under the oppression of this tyrannous and head-strong minister, earl Richard was the first to remonstrate boldly, and even haughtily to the king, on the imminent danger to the laws and liberties of the realm, and of consequence to his own crown and dignity, from the precipitate and imperious conduct of his favourite, and the inundation of foreigners which overspread the land. He declared that he and others of his peers would no longer deign to attend the king's councils, while numbers of insolent and contemptible Poictevins were allowed to engross the royal favour and attention. A sharp reply provoked him, and his adherents to absent themselves from parliament. They are summoned: they pretend to be apprehensive for their personal safety, and disobey the mandate: they are proclaimed traitors, and their lands assigned to foreigners. The cause of these discontented lords had all the advantage of popular favour and applause, and was at first honoured with the concurrence of Richard, brother to the king. But as he was speedily reconciled, and other lords were bribed by the minister to forsake their party, the earl Marshal was left almost singly to support a desperate contest with his sovereign: yet still disdaining a submission, he retired to Wales, and there confederating with Lewellin, and other chieftains of this province, declared his resolution of defending his lands and castles against any hostile attack whatever. Some attempts, which were made to reduce him, ended only

only in the disgrace of the king's arms. Where Henry commanded in person (for he was obliged to lead his forces against this refractory lord) earl Richard with an affected reverence declined to take any part in the engagement. When an advantage was gained over his countrymen; they were treated with the utmost lenity : to foreigners quarter was never granted. A successful insurrection, professedly pointed against an odious and arbitrary minister, could not fail to gain new friends and adherents. In vain did the English prelates entreat the king to stop the spreading disorder, by a just redress of grievances, and to seek an accommodation with those discontented lords, who might at least plead that they had been condemned and banished, without a fair trial by their peers. The imperious minister declared that they were entitled to no such privilege, and affected to wonder at their presumption in assuming the same consequence with the peers of France. As violent and sanguinary measures were more suited to his genius, with the assistance of his minions, he now concerted a scheme for the destruction of earl Richard, head and leader of this dangerous confederacy.

LETTERS under the king's seal^r, as well as the signature of the minister, and eleven of his creatures, were directed to Maurice Fitz-Gerald the Irish vicegerent, Hugh and Walter de Lacey, Geoffry de Maurisco, Richard de Burgho, and some other inferior lords, purporting, that Richard, late earl Marischal of England, had for his manifest treason, by sentence of the king's court been banished from the realm, his estates forfeited and seized, yet that he still persevered in obstinate rebellion

rebellion against his liege-lord. It was therefore signified to these the king's faithful subjects, that if the aforesaid Richard should land in Ireland, they should endeavour to secure and send him to the king alive or dead. In return for which service, his Majesty granted them all the lands which Richard had enjoyed in Ireland, and now forfeited by his disloyalty, to be divided amongst them, and be possessed by them and their heirs for ever : for the full effect of which promise, they who attested these letters made themselves sureties, on condition that the required service should be duly and faithfully performed.

THE division of a vast district in a part of Ireland the best improved, was a tempting allurements to these lords, whose darling objects were riches and influence ; and who were not always scrupulous and delicate in their pursuit^A. The insidiousness, with which they are charged on this occasion by a cotemporary writer, was by no means agreeable to the open generous character of English nobles, but was in some sort palliated and disguised by the appearance of loyalty and zeal for the service of their sovereign. Care was in the first place taken to convey intelligence to earl Richard, that the barons of Ireland had seized some of his castles, and ravaged his lands in Leinster. As a suspension of hostilities in Wales had allowed him to attend to his Irish interest, he embarked with fifteen attendants, relying on a sufficient support from his vassals and adherents in Ireland. Immediately on his arrival, he was attended by Geoffry de Maurisco, who, under pretence of attachment and devotion to his service, affected

^A Matth. Par.

affected to commiserate his wrongs, and applaud his generous contest against injustice and oppression: he observed how easily and effectually he might distress the king by the vigour of his operations in Ireland; that, supported as he was by numerous adherents, and in a cause favoured in general by both kingdoms, he could not fail of success, and might even reduce all Ireland to his obedience, by a due exertion of that spirit which had distinguished his illustrious progenitors. The earl was prevailed upon with little reluctance to adopt a scheme so flattering to his pride, and apparently so favourable to his cause. His forces were collected; hostilities commenced; his own castles readily recovered; Limerick taken after a siege of four days; and the citizens obliged to bind themselves by solemn oath to his service; and still extending his irruptions, he ravaged the lands, and seized several castles both of the king and his barons.

DE BURGH, the Laceys, and other lords who should have opposed these violences, fled before him with an affected terror; while his successes only served to drive him into the toils of his enemies. They now employed agents to represent to him, that, as liegemen, to king Henry, they could not look on tamely while he reduced the lands which had been entrusted to their custody. But to prevent the effusion of blood, they desired a truce; promising that if succours were not speedily received from the king, they should consider him as relinquishing his power and authority in the island, and on their parts should peaceably resign it to earl Richard, with whom they desired an interview on the plains of Kildare, in order to adjust

adjust the terms of this truce, and to effect an equitable and amicable agreement. Richard consented to appear at the place appointed, attended by a force nearly equal to that of his opponents; but by the insidious advice of Geoffry, haughtily refused to grant a truce. The barons replied that the sword should then instantly decide the contest. Each side prepared to engage; when in the moment of onset, Geoffry coldly told the earl, that his only measure was to yield to the demands of the barons; for as Walter de Lacey was married to his sister, he could by no means fight against his kinsman; and thus instantly marched away with fourscore of the earl's company, who had been bribed to this desertion. Richard was now left with his fifteen brave followers of Wales, to support the shock of one hundred and forty chosen men. The laws of romantic honour forbade him to fly. He turned tenderly to his young brother, took an affecting farewell, entreating him, as he was of too tender years to share a desperate encounter, to consult his safety—by retiring to a neighbouring castle. The enemy's attack was chiefly directed against his person: the barons themselves would not appear to take any part in this unequal engagement: their followers assailed the earl, and at length unhorsed him, though not without bloodshed and difficulty; when one of them, pointing a dagger at his back, where he was not defended by his armour, plunged it in his body to the hilt. The unfortunate earl was conveyed to one of his castles which Fitz-Gerald had in the mean time reduced, and expired in a few days after this fatal rencounter.

THE news of the death of earl Richard, a popular and favourite lord, was received in England with the deepest consternation, and the most violent resentment against the prelate of Winchester, who had sacrificed this noble victim to his revenge. Every circumstance of his death was aggravated by the rage of party, and every report propagated that could encrease the odium of the minister. It was even suggested that the basest treachery had been practised in the care of his wound; and that he might have happily recovered, but for the villainy of a surgeon, who purposedly tortured, and threw him into an ardent fever. An Irish agent was so foolish as to confess in London that he had taken a principal part in the death of this earl, and, by this indiscretion so provoked the popular fury, that he was immediately assassinated. The discontented nobles led the general clamour; affected the utmost indignation, and the utmost terror for their own persons. The king, justly dreading the effects of the present temper of the people, with a mean dissimulation expressed the deepest sorrow at the death of Richard, praised his great merits and endowments, lamented his own loss of so invaluable a subject, and ordered his chaplains to perform a solemn service for the repose of his departed soul. A sudden and striking event which affected all orders of his subjects, proved of more force than all the temperate remonstrances of his real friends, or even the violent opposition of a few barons. The seceding lords were invited to return to his councils, and had the security of the prelates for their safe-conduct. Gilbert, brother and successor of the late earl, was knighted, and invested with his lands, together with the office of

Earl

Earl Marishal. A convention of the nobles was held, to consider of the distracted situation of the realm. In this assembly, the archbishop of Canterbury produced a copy of the king's letter sent to the lords of Ireland, and signed by the minister and his creatures. The king, perceiving its effect, rose up, and basely denied that he had any knowledge of it, confessed that the bishop of Winchester had compelled him to affix his seal, but declared his own total ignorance of the purport of this letter, which he confirmed by a solemn oath in all the mortified abasement of a prince who had lost the confidence of his subjects. The bishop was summoned to appear, but, with some of his friends involved in the same disgrace, fled for sanctuary to the church of Winchester. The whole fabric of power which this proud foreigner had been so long raising, was in an instant utterly subverted. His creatures were banished or imprisoned; the court no longer filled with foreigners; the natives restored to favour; and the primate of England, a man of temper, prudence, and equity, admitted to a principal share of power and confidence with the king.

IN Ireland, the general temper of the people was equally inflamed by the death of earl Richard, and especially in that province where his family had possessed the first rank of dignity, and had been considered as the sovereigns of Leinster. The citizens of Dublin, an English colony, fraught with a full portion of the national spirit, echoed the clamours of their brethren of Englandⁿ, inveighed loudly against the treachery and cruelty of the minister, and seemed ripe for some act of violence.

violence. Henry even deigned to address a letter to these rough and turbulent burghers. He assured them of his intentions to convene the nobles of his realm, that every measure should be taken on mature advice, for the pacification and welfare of both kingdoms : he recommended to them to wait the result of his intended deliberations, which he graciously assured them should in due time be transmitted, and he doubted not, but would give them perfect satisfaction and content.

THE great lords of Ireland in the mean time proceeded to divide the spoil of earl Richard's lands with the most rapacious violence, envying and opposing each other, harrassing and ravaging their inferiours.* Their outrages were continued with the greater boldness, as Gilbert the present earl had soon fallen under the displeasure of Henry, having taken the same measures with his late brother, on the relapse of the king into his former oppressions and unjust partiality to foreigners. His marriage with the daughter of Alexander king of Scotland served to swell his pride : but less able, and therefore less respected than his brother, he was treated by Henry with greater harshness, and soon obliged to sue for a reconciliation ; which by the intercession of the king's brother was effected, and served to check the depredations committed on his Irish lands. Maurice Fitz-Gerald, dreading the consequences of his resentment, thought it expedient to repair to London, that by the mediation of the king he might be reconciled to a powerful young lord, now restored to the royal favour, and prevent the consequences of a dangerous family feud. In the presence of Henry and his

nobles, he exculpated himself by oath from any part or concurrence in the death of Richard : yet, for the sake of peace, and restoration of amity between their noble houses, proposed without delay to found a well-endowed monastery, furnished with a reverend conventual body, to offer up their constant prayers for the soul of this unhappy earl.

A FORMAL reconciliation was thus effected^r, and Maurice was preparing to depart, when Fedlim, prince of Connaught, suddenly appeared at the court of England, having at length obtained an opportunity of pleading his grievances and displaying the oppressions of de Burgho. This lord, soon after the death of earl Richard, had, by the restoration of his kinsman Hubert to some degree of favour, been encouraged to repair to England, and attend upon the king, who received him with an appearance of favour, though not uninformed of the violence of his conduct, and the many instances in which he had presumed to despise the royal authority^y. He only ventured to insinuate in a letter with which this lord was honoured soon after his return, that he should be careful, by a more punctual and ready compliance with his orders for the future, to obviate all suspicions which might be entertained of his disloyalty. But little affected by this gentle rebuke, he continued to indulge his ambitious views, and particularly to extend his settlements in Connaught, with an insolent contempt of any rights or claims of the Irish natives. Pretences for hostilities were readily found or invented : and de Burgho had the address to gain Fitz-Gerald, the chief governour to support his interested schemes^x. Under the pretence of re-

^r Matth. Par. ^y Cl. 19. Hen. III. ^x Ann. Anon. MSS.

pressing insurrections or enforcing the demands of government, they united in an invasion of the territories of Fedlim, which ended in the purpose for which it was undertaken, the usurpation of a considerable part of this district. The injured chieftain had no resource but to repeat his application to the throne: he artfully avoided to involve the chief governour in his accusation, confined his complaint to the excesses of de Burgho, and so effectually did he plead his cause, that the king, now happily disposed to redress all wrongs, ordered Fitz-Gerald to take the speediest and most effectual measures for repressing the outrages of this proud baron, and re-establishing the Irish prince in full possession of his rights.

THIS appearance of equity, and attention to the rights of his Irish tributaries seem to have been considered by the king as a matter of no small merit. It was soon succeeded by a requisition to *all the toparchs who had submitted^N, or were supposed

S 2

* The king's letter and the names of the Irish chiefs, are here given from Rymer: (tom. i. p. 426.) and the list of names possibly comprehends all or most of those (plusquam viginti reguli) who had submitted to king John.

" Rex Donnaldo regi de Tercurnell, [i. e. Tirconnell,] salutem.

" Cum provocante nos injuria regis Scotiæ, jam nos præparaverimus insurgere in ipsum pro pluribus transgressionibus, quas nobis fecit, ulciscendis, nisi ipsas gratis nobis emendare voluerit; de dilectione vestra confidentes, quod in hac expeditione nostra auxilium vestrum nobis denegare non velitis, vobis mandamus, quantum una cum Justiciario nostro Hiberniæ, & aliis, fidelibus nostris Hiberniæ, qui in proximo ad partes Scotiæ venturi sunt, ad inimicos nostros ibidem gravandos, talem & tam potentem succursum nobis impendere velitis, personaliter veniendo cum ipsis, bona gente muniti, quod in necessitate vestra, ad nos confidentius confugere debeatis. Nosque pro succursu vestro, ad preces nostras nobis impendendo, gratiam quam a nobis petieritis, libentius vobis teneamur impertiri, cum speciali gratiarum actione. Teste rege, apud Staunford septimo die Julii.

N Rymer.

" Eodem

supposed to be well-affected to him, to repair to his standard with their forces, in order to assist him against the king of Scotland; as they hoped to find resource in him, in their necessities, and that he should extend his grace to them, on their petitions. A sudden accommodation prevented him from discovering the effect of his letters, which were addressed to several chiefs, who, notwithstanding any former engagements, were disaffected, if not his open and avowed adversaries. In the following

“ Eodem modo scribitur,

FELMINO filio quondam REGIS, (sci. Connachtæ & Hiberniæ monarch. nomine.)

O’RALY.

UHANLUR, (i. e. O’HANLON.)

BREN O’NEL regi de Kinelun, (i. e. Kinel-cogain sive TIR-OWEN.)

O’CHATAN, (i. e. O’CATHAN.)

O’HYNERY.

DONALD MAC-DANIEL.

MAC-ANEGUS, (i. e. MACGINNIS.)

MAC-KARTAN.

MAC-GILLEMURI, (dux O’Niallorum de Clanneboia in agro Dunensi.)

G. FLBN regi de Turteri (i. e. O’FLINN regi de Hy-Turtria regione in comitatu Antrim lacui Neach contermina.)

MAC-MACHANAN, (i. e. MAC-MAHON.)

MAC-O’CALMERY, (principem esse suspicor Ostmannorum Waterfordensium.)

CONOHOR O’BRIN filius Dunecan Carbragh de Thodmend, (i. e. CONNOR O’BRIEN de Thomond.)

CORMACLETHAN MACARDHY de Dessemon (i. e. CORMAC MAC-ARTHY de Desmond.)

ROS O’FALANER de Dessia, (i. e. O’FAOLAN de Desies baronia in comitatu Waterford.)

RICARDO MACHERMEKIN de Dessia.

CORT-OTHENNER de Fermuy, (potius O’CONDON de Fermoy regione in comitatu Cork.)

SHONETHER O’CAFFERCY de Corrac.

MATHULANEC O’KELLIE de Ochonill, (O’KELLY de Crioch-Cualan regione in moderno comitatu de Wicklow.

MURCHAD MAC-BRIN de Natherlach (potius de RANILOGH regione de O’BRINS in com. de Wicklow.)

“ Prædicta nomina, quoad licuit, duximus exponenda, in gratiam rei Hibernicæ studioforum.” Harris.

following year, however, Fedlim had an opportunity of approving his gratitude by attending Fitz-Gerald into Wales, and performing good services against prince David. In which he had the greater merit, as he was the only chief either of the Irish or English race who obeyed the king's summons upon this occasion; although the governour was directed to address himself to each, to sound their dispositions^y, and to assure them of the royal favour on their compliance, and a share of such conquests as might be made by their assistance.

THE delay of Fitz-Gerald in leading his succours into Wales, to which Henry affected to impute the disgraces and distresses of his expedition^z, is said to be the cause of his removal from the Irish government, by which, a popular lord, with a powerful following, indifferent to the interests of a sovereign by whom he was disobliged, was sent into the South to raise new commotions among the most turbulent and inveterate of the Irish natives. He had no occasion to enter into plots or confederacies, to disturb the public peace. The Geraldines and their associates only proceeded to enlarge their settlements, and to extend their encroachments on the bloody sept of Mac-Arthy^a, and all the rage of war was instantly kindled in their quarter of the island. The death of Richard de Burgho, Hugh de Lacey, and Geoffry de Maurisco, which happened nearly at the same period, produced new commotion. The chiefs of Tirconnel in the North had taken arms immediately on the departure of Fitz-Gerald to the war in Wales^x; but at his return were, by the assistance of Fedlim, soon reduced.

^y Rymer.
^a Ann. Innisf. MSS.

^z Matth. Par.
^x Ann. Anon. MSS.

reduced. They were now encouraged to resume their hostilities, which the new governour, son of Geoffry, was immediately called to suppress; and found an obstinate enemy, which it was the whole business of his administration to subdue: nor was this effected but by the concurrence of some neighbouring Irish chiefs, who thus revenged their private quarrels on the prince of Tirconnel. Nor did the western part of Ireland continue to enjoy the advantages of Henry's protection. Walter, successor of Richard de Burgho, had married the daughter and heiress of Hugh de Laceyⁿ; and being of consequence invested with the earldom of Ulster, was enabled by so vast an accession of power to assert the claims of his family in Connaught with the more imperious violence. Fedlim was on some pretence of disaffection once more driven from his territory, and once more had the spirit to regain it by force of arms and to maintain his rights against the great English lords. The rising disorders of England encouraged them to despise the royal authority^r; on the increase of these disorders their confidence rose gradually to the highest pitch: they were ever the secret enemies, sometimes the avowed adversaries of each other; and in many places where they had obtained settlements, the natives were first driven into insurrections by their cruelty, and then punished with double cruelty for their resistance.

IN a country thus oppressed by severity, and harrassed by mutual competitions, the first symptoms of a disorder which proved so fatal to Ireland, could not fail to mark this wretched period of petty tyrannies. The English laws which had been

been so solemnly accepted and established, were soon found to be a system unfriendly to oppression. Too severe in punishing these outrages which subvert the peace of society, and too indulgent to the rights and properties of inferiours, they were scorned by an imperious aristocratic faction, who, in the phrenzy of rapine and ambition, trampled on the most salutary institutions; and by oppressing those immediately below them, taught them to become oppressors, and to stop that current of equity and justice which was their own most effectual security. So early as the year 1228, a remonstrance appears to have been made to the king against this dangerous neglect and suspension of the laws; so that he judged it necessary to transmit his mandate to the chief governour for suppressing this innovationⁿ. *He directed that the whole body of nobility, knights, free-tenants, and bailiffs of the several counties, should be convened; that the charter of English laws and customs received from king John, and to which they were bound

D Cl. 12 H. III. in Turr. Lond.

* “Rex dilecto & fideli suo Richardo de Burgo, justiciario suo Hiberniæ, salutem. Mandamus vobis firmiter præcipientes, quatenus certo die & loco, faciatis venire coram vobis archiepiscopos, episcopos, abbates, priores, comites, & barones, milites & libere-tenentes, & ballivos singulorum comitatum, & coram eis publice legi faciatis cartam domini Johannis regis, patris nostri, cui sigillum suum est, quam fieri fecit & jurari a magnatibus Hiberniæ, de legibus & consuetudinibus Angliæ conservandis in Hibernia. Et præcipiatis eis ex parte nostra quod leges illas & consuetudines in carta prædicta contentas, de cætero firmiter teneant & observent. Et hoc idem per singulos comitatus Hiberniæ clamari faciatis & teneri, prohibentes firmiter ex parte nostra, et super forisfacturam nostram, ne quis contra hoc mandatum nostrum venire præsumat. Eo excepto, quod nec de catillis Hibernensium occisorum nihil statuatur ex parte nostra citra quindecim dies a die Sancti Michaelis, anno regni nostri duodecimo, super quo respectum dedimus magnatibus nostris Hiberniæ usque ad terminum prædictum. Teste me ipse apud Westm. 8vo die Maii anno regni nostri, 12mo.”
Pryn. Anim. 252.

bound by oath, should be read over in their presence; that they should be directed for the future, strictly to observe and adhere to these; and that proclamation should be made in every county of Ireland, of this royal mandate, strictly enjoining obedience on pain of forfeiture of lands and tenements. How little effect was produced by this order, and how justly the opposition to the course of English law is imputed to the great lords of Ireland, we learn from a mandate of the same kind in the year 1246^d, in which the barons are commanded, that for the peace and tranquility of the land they may **. permit* it to be governed by the laws of England.

AND while these powerful lords thus subverted the peace and security of the English territories, with respect to the Irish natives, they were still less restrained in their violences, as these neither claimed nor enjoyed the benefits of the English constitution. It hath already appeared that in their earliest stipulations with Henry the second, the currency of their own old laws and customs was provided for, by those who became tributaries to the crown of England. And these laws and customs, and these only were continued, even in the

D Cl. 30. H. III.

* "Rex, dilecto, &c.

"Quia pro communi utilitate terræ Hiberniæ, & pro unitate terrarum regis, rex vult & de communi consilio regis provisum est, quod omnes leges & consuetudines quæ in regno Angliæ teneantur in Hiberniæ teneantur, eadem terra eisdem legibus subjaceat, & per easdem regatur, sicut dominus Johannes rex cum ultimo esset in Hibernia statuit & fieri mandavit. Quia etiam rex vult quod omnia brevia de communi jure quæ currunt in Anglia similiter currant in Hibernia sub novo sigillo regis. Mandatum est archiepiscopis, &c. quod pro pace & tranquillitate ejusdem terræ, per easdem leges eos deduci & regi permittant, & eas in omnibus sequantur. In cujus, &c." Pryn.

the territories of those chiefs who were best affected to the English government. Fedlim, the petty king of Connaught, was so far from conceiving that he or his people had acquired the valuable rights of English subjects in their full extent, that in a remonstrance to the king against the damages he had sustained by Walter de Burghoⁿ, he charges the burning of churches and the massacre of his priests and monks, at three thousand marks. As the English power was extended, this motly mixture of Irish tributaries and English subjects, proved of the most essential prejudice to the peace and welfare of the nation. The rights, properties, and even lives of the natives were particularly at the mercy of aspiring and rapacious barons, who, if too insolent to allow to their fellow-subjects those privileges which they justly claimed, had still less remorse in taking advantage of the weakness of those who claimed no such privileges, and making them feel the most afflicting consequences of their inferiority. The Irish were not long insensible of this disadvantage: they had learned by melancholy experience the superiour security which their neighbours enjoyed, and harrassed as they were on every side, by their native chiefs, and the more powerful English lordsⁿ, we have instances in this reign of a few the most peaceable among them suing for a royal patent, by which they might enjoy the rights of English subjects, and on their plea of fidelity and good services admitted by the king to a participation of these rights, notwithstanding they were denied to their countrymen in general *.

EXTRAVAGANT

ⁿ Rymer, ex Bundella Liberarum in Tur. Lon. in Pryn. Cl. 37 H. III.

* There are innumerable records of these grants made to individuals of the Irish race. I produce the earliest we find in this reign,

EXTRA^vAGANT and absurd as we may deem this general exclusion of the natives from the protection of the English laws, yet it arose neither from the want of equity, nor of discernment in the English monarchs. The necessities and pressing emergencies of the reign of Henry the second prevented the reduction of the island, and produced a treaty whereby the Irish were left in possession of their antient jurisdiction. Whatever may have been the representations of political and historical writers, it is too evident that at that time they neither desired nor accepted the English laws. They neither knew the superiour advantages of another constitution, nor traced their distresses to the irregularities and imperfections of their own; which had been sanctified by the usage of ages, by the fabulous or exaggerated traditions of their famous kings and law-givers, was inextricably interwoven with their manners, and with these, had taken too deep and extensive root to be at once removed by the greatest violence: and violence was neither originally exerted, nor intended, for this purpose. Time, indeed, had a continued

intercourse

as it shews evidently how far the benefits of English law were extended, or meant to be extended in Ireland: and that they were neither granted originally nor claimed, nor enjoyed by the Irish in general. A point too evident to be so often repeated and enlarged on in this history, but for the confused and mistaken representations of some political writers who deduce the most important consequences from their own erroneous conceptions.

“ Rex justiciario Hiberniæ salutem. Monstravit nobis Mamorch
 “ O’Ferthierum & Rothericus frater ejus, quod antecessores sui, &
 “ ipsi (licet Hibernenses) semper tamen firmiter fuerunt ad fidem &
 “ servitium nostrum & predecessorum nostrorum regum Angl. ad
 “ conquestum una cum Anglicis faciendum super Hibernenses: &
 “ ideo vobis mandamus, quod si ita est, tunc non permittas ipsos
 “ M. & R. repelli quin possint terras vindicare in quibus jus habent,
 “ sicut quilibet Anglicus, quia si ipsi & antecessores sui sic se habu-
 “ erunt cum Anglicis, quamvis Hibernenses, injustum esset LICET
 “ HIBERNENSES SINT, quod EXCEPTIONE QUA REPELLUNTUR
 “ HIBERNENSES, a vindicatione terrarum et aliis repellantur.

intercourse with the new settlers, taught some among them to sacrifice their national prejudices to their interest and security ; pointed out the superiour advantages of their English neighbours, and drove them to seek shelter from their wrongs, within the pale of English law : and the readiness of Henry the third in receiving them, directs us plainly to the true cause, which for a long time fatally opposed the gradual coalition of the Irish and English race, under one form of government. The great English settlers found it more for their immediate interest, that a free course should be left to their oppressions ; that many of those whose lands they coveted should be considered as aliens ; that they should be furnished for their petty wars by arbitrary exactions ; and in their rapines and massacres be freed from the terrors of a rigidly impartial and severe tribunal. They had the opportunity of making such representations as they pleased, to the court of England, and such descriptions of the temper and dispositions of the Irish, as might serve their own purposes most effectually. Those few, who forced their way to the throne in search of protection, were received with sufficient grace. But in times of general turbulence and anarchy, it is not surprising that the royal grace should not always prove effectual. For we are not to imagine that this dangerous spirit of oppression was peculiar to the barons seated in Ireland. They but shared in the vices of the times, and followed the pernicious example of their brethren in England, who despised and insulted the weakness of the throne, opposed the execution of the laws, and by the public contentions and disorders degenerated gradually into a band

band of outrageous plunderers, ravaging each other, and tyrannizing over their inferiours, in all the meanness of despotic insolence.

To repress the violences of his barons in Ireland, some feeble efforts were made by Henry, by sending a succession of Englishmen to the government, unconnected with the powerful settlers, without partialities or private views, but addicted solely to the service of their master^r. We find the names of Alan de la Zouch, Stephen Longespée, William Den, Richard de Capella, David Barry, Robert de Ufford, Richard de Exeter, James Audley, all entrusted with the administration of government in this kingdom, and succeeding each other at such short intervals as plainly indicate distraction in English councils, as well as an irregular and disordered state of things in Ireland. But in the year 1253, a measure was pursued which might have been attended with important consequences, had England been more composed, or the advantages of a regular and peaceable establishment of Ireland, justly and distinctly considered^r. On the marriage of the gallant prince Edward with the Infanta of Spain, the king vested him, among other territories, with the whole land of Ireland (except the cities of Dublin and Limerick^v, with their counties, the town of Athlone, and some inferiour districts lately granted or promised; excepting also the lands of the church, and custody of vacant churches) to be held by him and his heirs: provided that the lands thus granted should not be separated from the crown, but remain for ever

^r Hanmer.^v Matth. Par.^v Rymer.

ever to the * kings of England, and held by a delegated authority^c. The cities and counties reserved in this first grant were by a subsequent deed ceded to the prince, together with the debts and arrears due to the crown, and the issues and revenues of all the lands, except those arising from the vacancies of cathedrals, crosses, and abbies : and the whole grant at first executed in Gascony^r, was afterwards duly ratified and confirmed under the great seal of England. So that the lands, possessed or claimed by the king's subjects in Ireland, were now called the lands of lord Edward, the officers and ministers of government were stiled the officers of Edward lord of Ireland, and the writs ran in this prince's name^v.

SOME time after these grants^r, Edward was directed by his father to entrust the province of Gascony to his officers, and to repair to his Irish government, for the more effectual reformation and settlement of the state. And happy had it been, if a young prince of such distinguished abilities had really assumed the reins of government in Ireland, and exerted himself effectually in the reformation and settlement of this kingdom. But the disorders and misfortunes of his father's reign found sufficient employment for his active spirit. So that the affairs of Ireland were conducted by deputies, without sufficient force or support : and every act of the prince's government was watched narrowly by those who ruled in the king's name, and were alarmed at the spirit of his son^a. They sometimes superseded his

* Such are the very words of the charter.—“ Ita tamen quod prædictæ terræ & castra omnia nunquam separentur a CORONA, sed integre remaneant REGIBUS Angliæ in perpetuum.”

a Rymer. r Rymer ex Camer. Scac. v Davys.

r Rymer. A Matth. Par.

his writs as irregular and illegal^x: sometimes, commanded that his officers and wardens of castles should not be admitted or obeyed, without the king's letters patent; controuled him in his attempt to appoint a deputy; and commanded de la Zouch, to acknowledge no superiour but the king, nor to resign his authority without the royal mandate. In the latter and more composed part of this reign, when Edward might have influenced the affairs of Ireland most essentially even by his presence, the passion for crusades, at this time the favourite object of the noble and the brave, drove him into the East, where he endangered his life in a romantic pursuit of honour, instead of acquiring the real and solid honour of civilizing, and rescuing a disordered people from the bitterness of oppression and intestine tumult.

IRELAND, in the mean time, felt all the melancholly effects of a feeble government, an aspiring nobility, laws suspended and controuled, factions engendered by pride and oppression, the anarchy of the old natives, the injustice of the new settlers, local feuds, and barbarous massacres[†]. Brian O'Nial of Tir-owen, who with his principality inherited an inveterate aversion to English government, rose up in arms, compelled some neighbouring chiefs to join his standard, and spread confusion through all the North. Stephen Longespee was called out to oppose him, and, notwithstanding some advantage gained in the field, would have found it difficult to suppress this insurrection, had not the Irish prince fallen by the treachery of his own people. In the South, the Geraldines had for some time kept the state of an independent sept, supporting

^x Prynn. Brady.

[†] Ann. Innisf. MSS.

porting themselves, since the removal of Maurice Fitz-Gerald from the government, by their own power, and making war and peace by their own authority^a. They had mortified the Desmonians by their encreasing consequence, and provoked them by their severities. But the fierce and warlike race of Mac-Arthy, encouraged by the death of Maurice, suddenly took arms, and threatened his family with the most desperate vengeance. Each party was eager to take the field, where a desperate engagement was at length finally decided in favour of the Irish, who pursued their advantage with all the rage of implacable animosity^r. Thomas Fitz-Gerald and his son, eighteen barons, fifteen knights, and many of inferior note were slain on the part of the Geraldines; who thus lost their power, and for some time lived in perpetual terror of the Irish sept.

IN this contest, the Mac-Arthys affected only to defend their rights against the invasion of a neighbouring clan, and were so far from openly declaring against the English government, that at the very time of their greatest success^p, a new deputy landed on their coast, was received with the reverence due to his commission, and passed unmolested to the seat of government. The conquerors proceeded to demolish the castles erected by their rivals; and elated with success, turned their arms against some Irish septs who had provoked their resentment. Walter de Burgho was soon involved in these petty quarrels which interfered with the pretensions of his family, or promised to give them possession of some districts which he claimed or coveted. He marched against the Mac-Arthys,

^a Ibid. ^r Hanmer. ^p Ann. Innisf. MSS. ^k Ann. Innisf. MSS.

Mac-Arthys, slew their leader, ravaged their country^x, and obliged them to give hostages for the performance of such severe conditions as he was pleased to impose. The Geraldines seized the advantage of this reduction of their enemies, revived their old claims, assumed their former port ; but soon found they had a new and powerful adversary to encounter. De Burgho, whose object was the same with theirs, and who fought for the aggrandizement of his family, deemed both his honour and his interest concerned in quelling these aspiring rivals. Their feuds were violent and bloody, and for a long time continued to spread distraction and calamity, to the utter disgrace of the English government. The deputy attempted to interpose his authorityⁿ; when Fitz-Maurice and Fitz-Thomas, heads of the Geraldine faction, suspecting him of too great partiality to their antagonist, proceeded to an act of violence which even the Mac-Arthys had scrupled to commit ; seized his person at a conference, and sent him with Richard de Burgho, son of Walter, and some other lords, prisoners to one of their castles.

SUCH an outrageous defiance of authority raised a just and general alarm. The enemies of the Geraldines in particular inveighed loudly against their dangerous insolence. An assembly was convened at Kilkenny to consider of the remedies to be applied to the disorders of the kingdom ; and at their requisition, the imprisoned nobles were set at liberty^r. Henry, who received the most affecting representations of these excesses^o, could interpose no farther than by writing to the rival lords, and commanding them to suspend their animosities, and

^x Ann. Innisf. MSS. ⁿ Ibid. Hanmer. ^r Ibid. ^o Cox.

and to preserve the public peace. Barry, an active deputy, seized the castles of the Geraldines, and employed the forces of the state in confining them within such bounds as might prevent all danger and disturbance : while de Burgho, more the object of royal favour, was so elated as to make the most extensive demands upon the territories of Connaught, and bid defiance to all the rights and properties reserved by the native chiefs. Æth O'Connor, successor of Fedlimⁿ, rose up against his encroachments ; which was represented as an open and audacious rebellion against his liege-lord king Henry. Walter marched against him, but had the mortification to receive a signal defeat : nor did he long survive this disgrace.

THE example of these great rival lords was naturally followed by their immediate inferiours^r. Claims, pretensions, and contests multiplied without number : and all quarters of the kingdom were filled with petty feuds, the result of avarice and pride. Dearth and disease were the inevitable consequences of such extensive confusion, which, increased by seasons remarkably severe and tempestuous, aggravated the misfortunes of the kingdom, without suspending those animosities which produced such malignant effects.

To heighten the calamities of this dreary period yet further, the severest exactions were made on Ireland, both by the king, in his real or pretended necessities, and by the pope, in prosecution of his schemes either of avarice or ambition. In the year 1226^a, a fifteenth of all cathedral churches and

VOL. I.

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religious

ⁿ Ann. Innisf. MSS. Hanmer.^r Ann. Innisf. MSS.^a Prynn. Pat. 11 Hen. III.

religious houses, and a sixteenth of all other ecclesiastical revenues, were demanded by the king, with the concurrence of the pope. His quarrels with the Scots^p, with the Welsh, with France, with the king of Castile, were all made the occasions of large demands both on the clergy and laity. But those of the see of Rome were still more grievous and oppressive: in England they were odious; in Ireland, utterly intolerable^r. Here, the wretched laity were stripped even of their very necessities, the churches of all their ornaments, to supply the rapacious demands of legates and nuncios. The king, however solicitous to secure the favour and support of Rome, and of consequence disposed to countenance those exactions, yet sometimes found it necessary to yield to the general clamour, and to controul them not only in England but in Irelandⁿ. Legates were sometimes refused admittance into Ireland without the royal licence. They pleaded the necessity of repairing thither, to confer absolution on those who in the public commotions had laid violent hands upon the clergy; a spiritual power not to be entrusted but to the immediate delegates of the sovereign pontiff^k. The pretence could not be absolutely rejected in these times of superstition; but strict injunctions were sent to government, that the legantine authority should be confined to this single object; so that these ministers of oppression were obliged to recur to private and clandestine management, when the rapacious demand could not be openly avowed.

WITH

^p Pat. & Cl. var.ⁿ Cl. 29 Hen. III. Cl. 19 Hen. III.^r Hanmer.^k Ibid.

WITH the same effrontery as in England, attempts were made to overspread the kingdom with Italian ecclesiastics. The boldest remonstrances were made to the king against this scandalous abuse^r, of investing proud and luxurious foreigners with the dignities and revenues of the Irish church, who contemptuously refused to engage in the duties of their function, or to reside in the country which they pillaged by their extortions. The complaint appeared so just and urgent, that the king, who had scarcely power to maintain a regular government in Ireland, much less to support measures universally obnoxious, was obliged to interpose his authority, and by letter to his chief governour, directed that the pope's agents should not only be prevented from extorting money from the ecclesiastics, but from making such shameful dispositions of their benefices. But the clergy had not only the partialities of the pope, but those of Henry himself to contend with. The neglected, the worthless, or the depressed, among their English brethren, sought refuge in the church of Ireland, to the utter mortification and discontent of the whole body of ecclesiastics, both of the Irish and the English race, who regarded them as aliens, and deemed the invasion of what they called their own rights equally oppressive, whether Italy or England furnished this series of emigrants. Though forced to submit to the royal authority, strengthened by that of the pope, they yet determined to exert all the power they had left, against the invasions of these strange clergy*. By a bold and

T 2

violent

r Cl. 29 Hen. III.

* The Irish clergy were possessed with exalted ideas of the dignity and glory of their own church. They triumphed in their long catalogue of saints, and the legendary histories of their piety, purity, rigid

violent ordinance, it was agreed, that no man of the English nation should be admitted or received into a canonicate in any one of the Irish churches^p: nor could the king repress this spirit but by application to the pope; who, in his bull addressed to the prelates and chapters of Ireland, represents their ordinance as the effect of envy and unchristian

partiality, rigid discipline, and stupendous miracles: and affected to scorn these new intruders, and to dread their contamination. To swell this spiritual pride, Laurence O'Toole, their famous archbishop of Dublin, had been some time since canonized by pope Honorius. But what were the manners, at least of some among them, and how dangerously they had been infected by the popular vices of these unhappy times, we learn from the following curious petition of a widow, in the reign of Edward the first. Vid. Prynne, vol. iii. p. 243.

"Margaret le Blunde, of Cashel, petitions our lord the king's grace, that she may have her inheritance which she recovered at Clonmell before the king's judges, &c. against David Macmack-erwayt bishop of Cashel.

"Item, the said Margaret petitions redress on account that her father was killed by the said bishop.

"Item, for the imprisonment of her grandfather and mother, whom he shut up and detained in prison until they perished by famine, because they attempted to seek redress for the death of their son, father of your petitioner, who had been killed by the said bishop. "Item, for the death of her six brothers and sisters, who were starved to death by the said bishop, because he had their inheritance in his hands at the time he killed their father.

"And it is to be noted, that the said bishop had built an abbey in the city of Cashel, on the king's lands granted for this purpose, which he hath filled with robbers, who murder the English, and depopulate the country; and that when the council of our lord the king attempts to take cognizance of the offence, he fulminates the sentence of excommunication against them.

"It is to be noted also, that the aforesaid Margaret has five times crossed the Irish sea. Wherefore she petitions for God's sake, that the king's grace will have compassion, and that she may be permitted to take possession of her inheritance.

"It is further to be noted, that the aforesaid bishop hath been guilty of the death of many other Englishmen besides that of her father.

"And that the aforesaid Margaret hath many times obtained writs of our lord the king, but to no effect, by reason of the influence and bribery of the said bishop.

"She further petitions, for God's sake, that she may have costs and damages, &c."

What a prelate was this, even supposing the allegations aggravated!

partiality, and a design to establish hereditary right in God's sanctuary; commanding that it should be formally rescinded, within the space of one month, and in case of a refusal, threatening to rescind it by the plenitude of his authority, and to commission the prelates of Dublin and Ossory to declare it, in his name, absolutely null and void.

NOR is this the only instance in which the daring spirit of these ecclesiastics was experienced. Indefatigable in their encroachments on the civil power, and zealous in their attempts to extend the jurisdiction of their courts, they were ever seeking occasions of dispute and litigation, and artfully contrived to draw every suit into the sphere of their own tribunals; so that the king was obliged to direct his deputy to confine them to the cognizance of causes testamentary or matrimonial^r. The case of bastardy, it is well known, was in England violently agitated in this reign. Children born before wedlock, were by the common law adjudged incapable of inheriting, as illegitimate: the canon law pronounced them legitimate and legal inheritors; and of consequence, when the spiritual courts were directed by writ to try the legitimacy of any suitor, their sentence was conformable to the canon law, in direct opposition to that of the realm^a. The civil courts were thus obliged to change the nature of their writs, and confined the clergy to an enquiry into the simple fact, whether the party had been born before or after wedlock. The prelates complained of the innovation, and demanded in a parliament held at Merton, that the common law should be reduced to a conformity with the canon^s. The answer they received is famous:

^r Pat. 18 Hen. III. ^a Stat. Merton. ^s Prynn. Cl. 19 H. III.

famous : *Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari* : such was the spirited decision of the English nobility. The same contest subsisted in Ireland, and an application was made to the king's courts in England, to decide on this point, as well as on some others involved in it, where the real nature and purport of the common law were not clearly defined. The statute of Merton was therefore transmitted into Ireland for the direction of the king's subjects, and the regulation of their judicial proceedings in this kingdom.

THE very exactions made on the Irish clergy were the means of encreasing their turbulence and presumption. In return for the sums extorted from them, the king thought himself obliged to profess the utmost zeal for the defence of their rights and liberties*. The civil power was directed to give the same support to their sentence of excommunication as the law allowed to the clergy of England : and this instrument of ecclesiastical vengeance was levelled without mercy against all who presumed to dispute their authority or oppose their pretensions". In imitation of their brethren in England, they excommunicated the most *dignified personages

G Cl. 11 H. III.

H Rymer ex Autog. A. 1232.

* Stephen Longespee the king's own *natural* brother, was excommunicated with all his train, by the archbishop of Dublin, as appears by a close roll of 36th of this reign. But Hanmer, and other writers, have recorded an instance still more extraordinary, of the insolence of a bishop of Ferns, who excommunicated the great earl of Pembroke, on the pretence that he had disseized his church of two manors. On the death of this earl, the bishop appeared before the king and claimed these manors. Henry ordered him to pronounce sentence of absolution at the earl's tomb. The bishop attended him thither, and in the presence of the king had the insolence to pronounce with an affected dignity and solemnity : "O William, thou that here liest wrapped in the bonds of excommunication, if what thou hast
" injuriously

nages of the kingdom the moment they presumed to dispute the litigious claims of the church; so that the pope was obliged to interpose, and controul this inordinate abuse of spiritual authority. As the oppressions they endured, drove them to make reprisals on the laity, extravagant impositions were exacted under the name of oblations of the faithful. The magistrates and citizens of Dublin presumed to interfere on this occasion, and to circumscribe the revenues of their cathedralⁿ. The archbishop instantly fulminated a solemn excommunication against these sacrilegious invaders of his church, and laid the whole city under an interdict. Cardinal Ottobon was at hand to confirm the tremendous sentence. The citizens remonstrated; and the cause received a formal hearing before the lord-deputy (Ufford) and the council. But here the clergy proved triumphant; and the citizens were reduced to a composition, ridiculously abject and mortifyingⁿ. It was agreed that, in cases of any open and notorious offence, (in which no doubt, was included the offence of opposition to the clerical power or interest) a commutation, for the first time, should be made in money: that, in the second instance, the offenders should be cudgelled round the church: in the third, that the same discipline should be repeated publicly at the head of a procession; and that, in case of further

“ injuriously taken away be restored by the king, or thy heir, or thy friends, with competent satisfaction, I absolve thee. Otherwise, “ I ratify the sentence, that, being wrapped in thy sins, thou mayest “ remain damned in hell for ever.” As the heir would not give up the manors in dispute, the bishop confirmed his curse. And the superstitious vulgar were taught to believe, that the earl and his four brethren died without issue, by the immediate sentence of Heaven, in confirmation of that pronounced by its minister.

ther obstinacy, they should be either disfranchised, or cudgelled through the city.—Such were the citizens, whom a king of England thought it necessary to pacify by an apology for his conduct, and a promise of redress of grievances !



C H A P. II.

Accession of Edward the first—Maurice Fitz-Maurice his Irish deputy.—Is betrayed and taken prisoner.—Glenvill his successor defeated.—Ulster infested by the Scots.—Contest between the Geraldines and O'Brien.—Distress of the Geraldines.—Edward provoked at the disorders of Ireland.—Irish petition to be admitted to the benefits of English law.—Favourable answer of the king.—The petition defeated.—Second application equally unsuccessful.—Insurrections.—Feuds of the English lords.—Edward applies to the subjects of Ireland for subsidies.—Refused by the clergy.—Granted by the laity.—Expectations from the administration of de Vescey.—He quarrels with the baron of Ophally.—Resigns his lands.—Parliament of Sir John Wogan.—Its statutes.—Feuds of the English lords composed.—Edward's exactions in Ireland.—Fitz-Thomas of Ophally attends the king's service in Flanders.—Earl of Ulster embarks for the Scottish war—Effects of their absence from Ireland.

WE are not to expect that the state of Ireland should appear essentially improved by the accession of Edward the first to the throne of England. Though the high office he had enjoyed of lord of Ireland gave him opportunities of knowing its various grievances and disorders, and though he had discernment and abilities to apply the most effectual remedies, yet both the political and military talents of this renowned prince found sufficient employment in regulating and

and improving the disordered state of England, in reducing Wales, in contending with the Scots, and in the other occupations of his active and distinguished reign.

THE administration of Irish government^r had some time before the death of Henry been committed to Maurice Fitz-Maurice; who seems to have been appointed by the council upon the sudden death of Audley by a fall from his horse. On the demise of Henry, he received a letter in the name of his successor, notifying his accession to the throne^a, strictly enjoining that the king's peace should be maintained and preserved through the land of Ireland, and declaring that the rights and properties of his subjects in this kingdom should be defended by the throne, against injurious attempts of every kind. At the same time, it was enjoined that the nobility, knights, and free tenants, should take the usual oaths to their new sovereign. But such formal acts of government had so little tendency to controul or terrify the disaffected, that Maurice was immediately obliged to march against some insurgents who had destroyed several castles, and pierced even into the most flourishing parts of Leinster. And so well supported were the invaders, and such was the weakness of the governour, that his own followers betrayed him to the enemy. With an insolence of which he had himself set the example, he was seized in Ophally, and committed to prison: nor had his successor Glenvill, who had married a daughter of Walter de Lacey, much better successⁿ. The very seat of government was insulted, and in his attempts to suppress such audacious inroads,

inroads, he had the mortification to receive a signal defeat^c. Ulster in the mean time, was at once embroiled in civil dissensions, and infested by marauders from the Scottish isles, who carried on their depredations with impunity, while petty factions, composed both of English and Irish, pursued their private schemes of interest and revenge, and bad defiance to all legal authority. Maurice Fitz-Maurice, when released from his confinement, retired to his own lands, only to raise new commotions. Uniting with the lord Theobald Butler, he made a private war upon the Irish of Munster, and forced the O'Briens, who had of late discovered a pacific disposition, to take up arms against the invasions of a turbulent and ambitious neighbour.

THE power of the Geraldines^T had been considerably encreased by the marriage of Juliana, daughter of Maurice, with Thomas de Clare, son of the earl of Gloucester, a young lord of martial spirit, to whom Edward granted considerable lands in Thomond, and who now led a powerful train of followers into Ireland to support his claim. Such grants, precipitately made, obtained by false suggestions or unreasonable solicitations, provoked the pride, and sometimes the just resentment of the natives, who were thus harrassed and hunted from every quarter of the land^A. The O'Briens exclaimed loudly against the encroachments of this new colony : the young English lord treated their remonstrances with disdain ; and the contest, as usual, was soon brought to the decision of the sword. A signal defeat sustained by the Irish, in which the chief of the O'Briens fell by the treachery

chery of his own people, as his countrymen alleged, seemed to promise the complete establishment of the victors. But O'Brien had left two warlike sons, who exerted themselves with the utmost vigour to avenge their father's death, and assert the honour and interest of their sept. The war, which was renewed with double fury, ended in the total overthrow of the Geraldines. Many of their bravest knights were slaughtered. De Clare with his father-in-law was driven for immediate shelter into an inaccessible mountain; where being blocked up by the enemy, and reduced to the severest distress of famine, they were at length obliged to capitulate on the most mortifying terms: the O'Briens were acknowledged sovereigns of Thomond; hostages were given as a security for the eric, or satisfaction demanded for the death of their late chieftain, according to the Irish custom; and the castle of Roscommon, lately built and strongly fortified, and which the Geraldines held in custody for the king, was surrendered to the victorious enemy.

DE CLARE, who had now no resource but in the royal authority, sent the most pathetic representations to the king, of his distress and supposed injuries^r. Edward had lately transmitted his mandate to the prelates of Ireland, to interpose their spiritual authority for allaying and composing the public disorders: and now, the news of civil war in Munster was followed by the most alarming accounts of insurrections in Connaught, and the slaughter of the Irish prince of this province by a rival chieftain. Provoked by these multiplied vexations, he passionately recalled the chief go-
vernour,

vernour, Ufford, into England^v; who, leaving the administration in the hands of Fulburne, a friar, encouraged the disaffected in Leinster to renew their outrages; and having readily satisfied the king, who was intent on more pressing, and to him more important objects, than the settlement of this unhappy kingdom, was remanded to Ireland, to repress the commotions which his absence had excited.

IN the midst of various disorders public and private, where every little district shared in the general distress, and every individual was exposed to danger and depredation, those Irish, who by their situation held a constant intercourse with the English, who lay contiguous to the county lands, or whose settlements intersected those of the king's subjects, found perpetual occasions to lament the manifold disadvantages of those old native institutions to which they were abandoned, and which rendered their lives and properties more precarious than those of their English neighbours, so as to provoke the injustice of their enemies, at the same time that they were deprived of the necessary defence. All hopes of exterminating the English were long since resigned. The only rational purpose, now to be pursued, was that of acquiring the rights and privileges enjoyed by those with whom they were thus connected, and to change the state of vassals and tributaries to the king of England, for the security and advantage of English subjects^A. An application was made to Ufford the chief governour, and eight thousand marks offered to the king, provided he would grant the free enjoyment of the laws of England to

to the whole body of the Irish inhabitants. A petition, wrung from a people tortured by the painful feelings of oppression, in itself so just and reasonable, and in its consequences so fair and promising, could not but be favourably received by a prince possessed with exalted ideas of policy and government, and, where ambition did not interfere, a friend to justice. The answer returned by Edward is too memorable not to be here inserted at large.

“ Edward by the grace of God, king of England,
 “ lord of Ireland, and duke of Aquitain, to
 “ our trusty and well beloved Robert de Ufford,
 “ justiciary of Ireland, greeting.

“ **T**HE improvement of the state and peace
 “ of our land of Ireland, signified to us by
 “ your letter, gives us exceeding joy and pleasure.
 “ We entirely commend your diligence in this
 “ matter, hoping, (by the divine assistance) that
 “ the things there begun so happily by you, shall,
 “ as far as in you lieth, be still further prosecuted
 “ with the greater vigour and success.

“ AND whereas the † community of Ireland
 “ hath made a tender to us of eight thousand
 “ marks,

† Whatever general expressions the king might have been accustomed to employ, yet it seems not only improbable but impossible that the application could have been really made, unanimously, by all of the Irish race, in every quarter of the island. They had at this time no national council; nor did any band of union subsist between the different septa. Nor could those who had but their local interests to pursue, and were in a constant state of war with each other, be easily prevailed on, (even if the proposal could have been communicated) to enter into any amicable conference, or concert any measures for the general advantage of all the unconnected and discordant septa. Nor did those who lived most detached from the

“ marks, on condition that we grant to them the
 “ laws of England to be used in the aforesaid
 “ land, we will you to know, that, inasmuch as
 “ the laws used by the Irish are hateful to God,
 “ and repugnant to all justice, and having held
 “ diligent conference and full deliberation with
 “ our council on this matter, it seems sufficiently
 “ expedient to us and to our council, to grant to
 “ them the English laws ; provided always that
 “ the general consent of our people, or at least
 “ of

English, perceive any advantage in exchanging their old institutions for another system. On the contrary, it was with the utmost labour and difficulty, and the most obstinate reluctance on their part, that the English law could be obtruded on them, some centuries after the present period.

The petition, it is to be observed, was for a grant of the English law to be used IN THE LAND of Ireland. It is expressly called in another record, immediately to be quoted, the petition of the Irish of that *land*. In like manner, the king's deputies are frequently said to be entrusted with the custody of his *land* of Ireland ; or to undertake the custody of his *land*. By this phrase, I conceive we are to understand no more than the district possessed by the English subjects, or what is generally called the ENGLISH PALE. That this is not a mere conjecture, appears from the following passage of a record in the reign of Elizabeth. (Rot. Canc. Hib. 6 Eliz. Dorso.) “ Item, “ farasmuch as no small enormities doo grow within those shires [viz. “ Cork, Limerick, and Kerry] by the continual recourse of certain “ idle men of lewd demeanor called rymers, bardes, and dice-players, “ who, under pretence of their travail, doo bringe privy intelligence, “ between the malefactours inhabiting in those several shires, as well “ as within THE LANDE, &c.”

Here, *the lande* is evidently used as the well-known denomination of the district called the Pale. In this district several septs of Irishry had been permitted to dwell, even from the time of Henry the second, who professed a peaceable submission to English government, without being admitted to the privileges of English subjects. In Wicklow, even close to the seat of government, in Ophally, in Leix, and other places bordering on the English settlements, were many considerable chieftains with their warlike followers. All these, by their situation, held constant intercourse, had frequent contests and litigations with the king's subjects. They every day experienced that their lives and properties were less defensible than those of their neighbours ; and that this inferiority every day provoked injustice and oppression. It was natural for them to desire that they all might be peaceably united with those around them, under that equitable government which by this time was established too firmly to be overthrown.

“ of the prelates and nobles of that land, well
 “ affected to us, shall uniformly concur in this
 “ behalf.

“ WE therefore command you, that having
 “ entered into treaty with these Irish people, and
 “ examined diligently into the wills of our com-
 “ mons, prelates, and nobles, well affected to us,
 “ in this behalf, and having agreed between you
 “ and them on the highest fine of money that you
 “ can obtain, to be paid to us on this account, you
 “ do, with the consent of all, at least of the
 “ greater and sounder part aforesaid, make such a
 “ composition with the said people, in the pre-
 “ mises, as you shall judge in your diligence, to
 “ be most expedient for our honour and interest.
 “ Provided, however, that these people should
 “ hold in readiness a body of good and stout
 “ footmen, amounting to such a number as you
 “ shall agree upon with them for one turn only,
 “ to repair to us when we shall think fit to demand
 “ them.”

WE see the just and honourable dispositions of Edward, notwithstanding his attention to make this incident subservient to his affairs. But his wisdom and rectitude were fatally counteracted, and by those who should have ran foremost in the prosecution of a measure, which would have prevented the calamities of ages, and which was obviously calculated for the pacification and effectual improvement of their country. But it would have circumscribed their rapacious views, and controuled their violence and oppression. As the petition could not be openly opposed upon any principles

principles of reason, justice, or sound policy, every subterfuge was employed, and every evasion practised to prevent a convention of the king's barons and other subjects in Ireland. Edward was assured that an immediate compliance with his commands was not possible in the present state of things ; that the kingdom was in too great ferment and commotion ; that far the greater number of barons were dispersed on the necessary business of the state, and defence of their own and of the king's lands ; that many of them were under age and in guardianship, so that an assembly could not be formed sufficiently numerous and respectable, to decide upon a point so weighty. And such pretences were sufficient, where the aristocratic faction was too powerful, and the king too deeply engaged in more urgent affairs. But the cry of oppression was not immediately silenced : the application of the Irish was renewed, and the king repeatedly and urgently solicited to accept them as his faithful subjects *. * So that two years after, we find

VOL. I.

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him

† Prynn. Anim. p. 257.

N A. D. 1280.

* “ Rex, archiepiscopis, episcopis, abbatibus, prioribus comitibus, baronibus, militibus, & omnibus Anglicis de terra Hiberniæ, salutem. Ex parte Hibernicorum *de terra prædicta* nobis extitit humiliter supplicatum, quod sibi de gratia nostra concedere dignaremur, ut eisdem legibus & consuetudinibus communibus uti & gaudere possint IN TERRA, quibus Anglici ibidem utuntur & gaudent, & secundum easdem leges et consuetudines deduci valeant in futurum. Nos autem, quia hujusmodi concessi-
 “ onem absque conscientia vestra iis ad præsens non duximus faci-
 “ endam, vobis mandamus, quod ad certos dies, quos ad hoc pro-
 “ videritis ; videlicet circa festum nativitatis beatæ Mariæ Virgi-
 “ nis in aliquibus locis opportunis, conveniatis, & inde diligentem
 “ tractatum inter vos habeatis, utrum sine præjudicio vestri & liber-
 “ tatum & consuetudinum vestrarum & etiam dampno vestro dictam
 “ concessionem facere possimus eisdem, nec ne : & de omnibus aliis
 “ circumstantiis hujusmodi concessionem contingentibus, et de hoc
 “ quod inde feceritis nobis citra proximum parliamentum nostrum
 “ quod erit apud Westmonasterium a die Sancti Michaelis in unum
 “ mensem,

him summoning the lords spiritual and temporal, and the whole body of English subjects in the land of Ireland, to assemble and deliberate on this petition, which he declares that he does not judge proper to be granted without their consent ; assigning a particular season for their convention, directing them to transmit their sentence and decision, and strictly enjoining a peremptory compliance with this his mandate, notwithstanding the absence or minority of any number of their peers : thus plainly pointing out the pretences formerly alledged for not complying with his commands, and expressing an impatience and displeasure at their reluctance to take an affair of such moment to the kingdom into immediate and impartial deliberation.

WHETHER the parliament was convened in consequence of this order, and had the folly or effrontery to declare against the expediency of the proposed grant, or whether insidious artifices were still practised to evade the royal mandate, doth not appear from any authentic record : but certain it is, that the wise and just intentions of Edward were defeated, and that, during the course of his reign, individuals of the Irish race were obliged to sue for particular charters of denization, which we find granted to several, particularly on their intermarriage with the English.

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“ *mensẽm, sub sigillo justiciarii nostri Hiberniæ vel ejus locum tenentis & sigillo dilecti & fidelis nostri Roberti Bagot, distincte & aperte una cum concilio vestro constare faciatis. Et hoc propter absentiam quorundam de paribus vestris, quos ibidem interesse non contigerit, vel illorum qui sunt infra ætatem & in custodia, nullatenus omittatis ; ut nos ex tunc habita super hoc deliberatione pleniori inde provideri faciamus quod nobis & consilio nostro magis videatur expedire. In cujus, &c. Tette rege, apud Westmon. 10 die Septembris. Pryn. Anim. p. 257.*”

IT is natural to imagine that this repeated opposition to their endeavours to become peaceable and useful subjects, could not but irritate the spirits of the Irish, give new edge to their resentments, and foment the local jealousies and contests which subsisted between them and their English neighbours*. They soon appeared in arms*, but without power, union, or address, to form any scheme of general confederacy; so that these insurrections served but to ravage the several districts exposed to their fury, to raise a temporary confusion, or to revenge particular quarrels. In Desmond, indeed, the discontented Irish formed a more regular scheme of opposition. The Mac-Arthys, ever implacable enemies to the English, proceeding with a dark and determined rancour, assembled secretly, discussed the pretensions of their several lords quietly

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* "As long as they [the Irish] were out of the protection of the law," (saith the judicious Sir John Davys) "so as evrie Englishman might oppresse, spoile, and kill them without controulment, howe was it possible they should be other than outlawes and enemies to the crown of Englande? If the king woulde not admit them to the condition of subjects, how could they learne to acknowledge and obey him as their sovereigne? When they might not converse, or commerce with any civil men, nor enter into any towne or citty without perrill of their lives, whither should they flye but into the woods and mountains, and there live in a wilde and barbarous manner? If the English magistrates would not rule them by the lawe which doth punish murder and treason and theft with death, but leave them to be ruled by their own lords and lawes, why shoulde not they embrace their own Brehon lawe, which punisheth no offence but with a fine or ericke? If the Irish bee not permitted to purchase estates of freeholds or inheritance, which might discend to their children, according to the course of our common lawe, must they not continue their custom of tanistrie, which makes all their possessions uncertaine, and brings confusion, barbarisme, and incivility? In a word, if the English woulde neither in peace governe them by the lawe, nor in war root them out by the sworde, must they not needs be prickes in their eyes, and thornes in their sides, till the world's ende?"

Davys's Discoverie.

and patiently, parcelled out the lands of Desmond, assigning what they now possessed or expected to recover, according to their own notions of justice and equity, founded on antient arrangements and possessions. They agreed in the election of a prince called Daniel Roadh, marched under his conduct against the English of their province, and were so successful as to seize some castles, and to drive the enemy from several of their settlements. The O'Briens, their neighbours, less subtle, and more precipitate, were at the same time ready to draw the sword against each other, on the usual subject of Irish war, the succession to the sovereignty of their province: Thomas de Clare, by a sudden revolution of fortune, by no means surprising in the present state of Ireland, had regained his power, and now appeared a lord of such consequence^x, that when Edward solicited an Irish loan in support of his war against Wales, he addressed himself particularly to de Clare, and appointed him his principal agent for transacting this business with the general convention or parliament of his subjects in Ireland. This lord now judged it convenient to his interests, to espouse the cause of one of the competitors of Thomond^v; armed in favour of his pretensions, and obliged his countrymen to accept him as their chief. His rival, still supported by a powerful faction, provoked at this odious interposition of the English, animated his followers to a brave resistance, collected his forces, and prepared to wage a bloody war against this new-created chief^v; when Mac-Arthy, hearing of these rising commotions, suddenly and secretly passed into Thomond, and exerted all his address to

^x Rymer ex Rot. Walliz, 10 Ed. I.
^v Ann. Innisf. MSS.

^v A.D. 1282.

to restrain the blind rage of his countrymen. He entreated them to consider that they were arming against their own brethren, preparing to depopulate their own lands, blowing up the flame of civil dissension, which had already wasted their unhappy country ; that they had a common enemy, industriously to take advantage of their disorders, and to subdue them by their own weapons ; that their own interest, and that of all their countrymen, called loudly upon them to compose their private differences, and wait with patience, leaving the folly of civil dissention to the English, till weakened by their mutual rivalry and jealousy they might afford the injured Irish a fair occasion to unite, and by one effectual blow to vindicate their native rights, and avenge their oppressions. His mediation was successful ; and indeed the present state of things gave but too great force to his representations.

THE English lords and principal settlers in every part of Ireland^r, in the lust of power and possessions, were become the bitterest and most implacable enemies to each other. Barret and Cusack, two Englishmen of figure, settled in Connaught by de Burgho, drew their swords against each other, and committed the most alarming slaughter and desolation, which ended in the destruction of the former. The power of lord Theobald de Verdon, possessed of a considerable domain in Meath, by right of his marriage with a daughter of Walter de Lacey, excited the envy of Gerald Fitz-Maurice, baron of Ophally, who attacked his castles, defeated his forces, was himself defeated in turn, and made a prisoner. Lord Geoffry Genneville and his fol-
lowers

lowers in another part of Meath, were also driven from their possessions. These petty broils were multiplied, and continued for some years unnoticed, or at least unrestrained by the king's vicerents^r. The death of Maurice, and Gerald Fitz-Maurice, with that of lord Thomas de Clare, all in the same year, promised to depress the power of the Geraldines, and left Richard de Burgho, earl of Ulster, in an undisputed rank of eminence: and so considerable was the port of this nobleman, and so great his authority in these times, that in the king's letters we find his name frequently mentioned before that of the chief governour. But his power was employed in oppressing and destroying those who stood in the way of his insatiable ambition. He claimed the lands of Meath possessed by Verdon, and with a tumultuous troop of followers, invaded, and besieged this lord in one of his castles. The Irish of Meath and Ulster, impatient to take advantage of these disorders, aggravated the general distress by their insurrections, and often-times were the victims of their own precipitation.

THIS confusion in the state of Ireland little corresponded with the views of Edward, and the necessities of his government. He had already been engaged in war; had contracted debts by his negotiations on the continent^e; the troubles of Scotland were commenced, and the king possibly had good reasons to provide for taking all advantages that might be derived from them. He had already, by the interposition and assistance of the pope, obtained a tenth of all their revenues from the Irish clergy, on pretence of providing for an expedition to the Holy Land. But, not contented with this supply,

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and determined to try the exertion of his own authority in Ireland, before he made a like attempt in England, in his own name, and without any participation of the holy see, he demanded an additional fifteenth of all the spiritualities in that kingdom^c. The clergy were neither disposed to give countenance to this innovation, nor well enabled to comply with the severe demand. They therefore appealed to Rome, and desired the protection of the sovereign pontiff against this encroachment on his authority. At the same time, in the humblest manner, they represented to the king the distressed condition of their church, arising from the wars and commotions of the realm, expressing a concern for their inability, but at the same time, peremptorily refusing to comply with the requisition. Edward had not yet learned to treat these refractory ecclesiastics with that severity which he practised, some time afterwards, on his English clergy. He addressed himself to the laity of Ireland, and he found them more complying. After some altercation and delay, they granted a fifteenth of their effects,

To enforce these demands, and to allay the public commotionsⁿ, William de Vesey was intrusted with the government of Ireland^p, an English lord, who by his spirit and activity, joined with a rigid and inflexible temper, seemed well fitted for the management of a disordered state. In his opposition to the Irish insurgents he was sufficiently successful; but when he proceeded to trace the present evils of the nation to their source, and to repress the violences of the great English lords, he provoked the resentment of John Fitz-Thomas Fitz-Gerald,

Fitz-Gerald, baron of Ophally, which produced a lasting animosity, and at length ended in a formal accusation of each other^a: the governour alledging before the council, that Fitz-Gerald had calumniously charged him with an attempt to revolt from his allegiance, and to seduce others into a rebellious confederacy; the baron denying the charge, but accusing Vesey of some seditious and disloyal expressions uttered in England. The combat was demanded and accepted; and if we are to believe Hollingshead, before the day-appointed for the decision, Vesey fled to France, and his lands in Leinster were bestowed upon his rival. But the truth is, that the king, informed of this contest, summoned the parties to appear before him at Westminster; where, after various pleadings and adjournments, the whole process was at length annulled as informal and irregular; and that Vesey afterwards resigned his manors, castles, and county of Kildare to the king, which he held by marriage with one of the coheiresses of the family of the earl Marishal, and in which his right was contested by the other daughters. It is equally certain that Fitz-Gerald, on his return to Ireland, acted with the usual violence of a great English lord; opposed his rivals, asserted his claims, and enlarged his possessions, by force of arms. He even proceeded to attack the earl of Ulster, with whom he disputed the right of some lands in Connaught, conquered him in the field, became master of his person, and had the hardiness to confine him in prison, still continuing his incursions and hostilities, to the great terrour and annoyance of the richest and most flourishing districts of the kingdom. In consequence of these outrages he was formally impeached,

appeared

appeared before the king, submitted absolutely to his mercy, and was obliged to give security for his future peaceable and loyal demeanour.

THE most effectual attempt to reform the wretched state of Irish affairs in this reign was made by Sir John Woganⁿ, appointed to the government in the year 1295, who might have proved of singular advantage to the nation, if the corruption of manners had not been at this time irresistibly superiour to the best and wisest institutions. With a temper and discretion unknown to several of his predecessors, he applied himself in the first place to compose the dissensions of the great lords by every lenient and conciliating method. He found the houses of de Burgho and Fitz-Gerald still at variance with each other; and still engaged in petty hostilities; and although he could not entirely reconcile two nobles equally imperious and aspiring, he yet prevailed on them to suspend those animosities which cast the land into such dangerous convulsions; so that in all the forms of contending potentates, they at length agreed to make a truce for two years, that the governor might have leisure to apply some remedy to the general disorder of the realm. For this purpose, a parliament was summoned more regularly than such assemblies had hitherto been convened in Irelandⁿ. Besides the writs to the lords spiritual and temporal, those sent to the sheriffs directed them to return two knights for each of the Counties and liberties (as they were called); and although several declined to attend, and the assembly was inconsiderable in point of numbers, yet by the ordinances here enacted, the public grievances

grievances seem to have been maturely weighed, and with a serious intention of providing the most effectual redress in their power. The acts of this assembly seem to deserve some notice, as they afford a distinct view of the more notorious irregularities and abuses of this period.

THE peace and security of the English territory, the great and indeed the sole object of deliberation, required, in the first place, that strict and regular execution of the laws of England, which had been neither countenanced nor supported by the nobles and principal settlers. And to this necessary and valuable purpose, it was found that the division of counties hitherto established was by no means favourable. The county of Dublin in particular was too extensive and confused, comprehending not only the greatest part of Leinster, but of Meath and Ulster. It was therefore ordained that each of these latter should have its particular sheriff; and that Kildare, which had formerly been a liberty appendant upon Dublin, should now be erected into a distinct county*.

PARTICULAR encouragement had been given to the incursions of the Irish by the absence of the lord marchers, who living a life of indulgence upon their manors, in the securer and more composed parts of the kingdom, abandoned their charge upon the borders: by which their countrymen were either driven from their settlements, or reduced to a state of vassalage by their invaders. The marchers therefore were enjoined to maintain
their

y Ibid.

* Hence it appears that the enumeration of the counties appointed in the reign of John, as it is generally stated by historians, is really inaccurate; as hath been already hinted.

their necessary wards for the future, on pain of forfeiture of their lands.

In the present situation of the country, it is natural to suppose that every English tenant should be trained to arms, and that the whole collection of settlers should have been one regular, well-formed, and well-appointed militia. And yet we find that their settlements were frequently surprized in an helpless state, without arms or any provisions for defence; a grievance considerably increased, by a number of lords who lived entirely in England, without any attention to the security of their Irish tenants, and without contributing to the general defence of their countrymen. It was therefore enacted that tenants of every degree should provide according to their rank, towards a military establishment; and that absentees should assign a competent portion of their Irish revenues for this necessary purpose.

It appears also, that in cases of particular incursions of the Irish, the neighbouring settlers, far from being united in the bands of cordial affection with their countrymen, frequently looked on with indifference, sometimes with an envious satisfaction at their distress, without attempting to assist them, or to repel the invasion. In such cases of wilful neglect it was enacted, that the aggrieved party should be entitled to damages from their neighbours.

As the frequent military expeditions of the great lords were a capital grievance, and their unnatural dissensions not only weakened the English interest,
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and encouraged the common enemy, but oppressed the subject by grievous and arbitrary exactions, it was also ordained, that for the future, no lord should make war but by licence of the chief governor, or by special mandate of the king. And to restrain the numbers and disorders of their idle retainers, or KERNES (as they are called,) every person of whatever degree was forbidden to entertain more of these than he could himself maintain; and, in case of any violent exaction or forcible depredation made by these lawless followers, their lord was to pay the damage, and the kerne to be imprisoned, until he found sufficient security for his good behaviour.

It appears to have been an usual artifice of the Irish, when any particular district was the object of their hostilities, to make a truce for a certain time with other contiguous settlements, that so they might execute their hostile purposes without controul: which generally ended in their falling upon those who had consented to the suspension of arms. It was therefore enacted, that no truce should be ever made with the Irish but what was general and equal; and that those who made such partial and separate engagements, should be considered and treated as accomplices in the havock that might ensue: at the same time, it was provided that the Irish themselves should not be molested, when they had once concluded a fair and general truce, by any insidious incursions or hostilities, which had frequently produced the bloodiest reprisals and involved the innocent in the consequences of their revenge.

AND

AND, as in cases of sudden insurrections of the Irish, when the chief governour was at a distance, and could not immediately issue the necessary orders for repressing them, the English were frequently inactive and remiss, it was enacted, that from the moment that any hostilities were commenced, the county or liberty attacked should, instantly and without further orders, rise in arms, and maintain the war at their own proper charges, without intermission or suspension, till the enemy should be reduced or consent to a cessation, or the chief governour should otherwise direct. And, to deprive the enemy of their usual shelter, every lord was directed to repair and clear the roads through his woods and forests, to make bridges, pathways, and other provisions, for traversing the country with readiness and security, and pursuing the insurgents into their retreats.

It appears also, from the ordinances of this assembly, that so early as the reign of Edward the first, the English had began to conform to the disordered and licentious manners of the Irish natives. Living in a state of perpetual confusion and hostility, they learned the compendious method of violence and rapine, in order to supply their necessities, or to gratify their passions: and impatient of the salutary restraints which their own laws imposed, they contrived an easy method to elude their force. They affected the garb and outward appearance of Irishmen; who, as they shared not the security, so neither were they restrained by the penalties of English law. Such were the beginnings of a degeneracy so fatal in its progress. And, what shews the infatuation of these corrupted

corrupted English, the ordinances of this assembly recite, that, by thus wearing their garb, and fashioning their hair according to the Irish mode, they were frequently mistaken, and their lives reduced to the same precarious hazard with those of the old natives; that they were frequently killed, and no cognizance taken of their death, according to the English polity: so that deadly feuds arose between the relations and friends of each party, both the perpetrator and the sufferer. It was therefore enacted, that all Englishmen should conform strictly to the garb and tonsure of their own countrymen, at least in the fashion of their hair; that if in this latter, obvious, and striking mark of distinction they presumed to take the appearance of Irishmen, they should as such be treated, and not be entitled to remedy, in case of any plaint or suit, but what was granted to the Irish: in the mean time they were to be compelled to conform to the tenour of this ordinance on pain of seizure of their lands and chattels and imprisonment of their persons.

AND, lastly, two lords were appointed to every county and liberty in which Irishmen were resident, who, in the absence of the chief governour, should have full power to treat with the Irish, and make such stipulations with them as might secure their district from molestation or disorder.

THESE ordinances were devised with equity and propriety; but could not have complete and lasting influence upon a people crumbled into a number of detached bodies, separate interests, and rival factions; led by nobles impatient of subordination, and habituated to the violences and outrages of war.

war. Yet on their first establishment they do not seem to have been entirely destitute of effect : they served to give some check to the disorders of the realm, though not to terminate or subdue them. The incursions of the Irish were for a time repressedⁿ : the earl of Ulster, by the repeated mediation of the chief governour still continued to live in peace with the Geraldines^k. John Fitz-Thomas, confiding in the pacific disposition of his rival, departed from the kingdom, and with a considerable train attended the service of the king, in Flanders. Edward, encouraged by the appearance of greater tranquillity in Ireland^r, ventured to repeat his application to the clergy for a subsidy ; with what success we are not informed^a. The tenths formerly granted for the service of the Holy Land, and which Boniface the present pope took upon him to collect, were seized by the king's order in the hands of the Romish agents, and applied to the exigences of his government. The pontiff, who had experienced the firmness and spirit of king Edward, ventured only to expostulate with gentleness, and affected to make him a free present of the revenue of these tenths which the king had already secured to his own use. The renewal of his war with Scotland during the regency of John Commin, obliged him to have recourse to every expedient to strengthen and support his operations. His Irish subjects were repeatedly enjoined to confer and to devise the means of assisting his intended expedition^p. John Fitz-Thomas, attended his standard in Scotland ; and the earl of Ulster, that he might not be outdone in zeal and loyalty, soon afterwards assembled a gallant train in Dublin^v, created

ⁿ Cox. ^k Rot. Turr. Berm. A.D. 1297. ^r Prynn. t. III. p. 864.
^a Rymer, t. II. p. 872. ^p Reily. App. Rymer. ^v Hen. Marlb.

created thirty knights, and embarked for the Scottish war, in which he performed distinguished services.

THE absence of such powerful lords produced its natural effect in Ireland, in encouraging a licentious spirit of insurrection, and giving free course to the treachery and turbulence both of the English and the Irish inhabitants. Several feuds broke out with new violence, and petty wars were carried on, to the utter desolation of the finest and most valuable of the English settlements; the disorder extended even to the seat of government; and the utmost efforts of the chief governour and the well-affected lords, were scarcely sufficient to defend the province of Leinster.



C H A P. III.

Accession of Edward the second.—Gaveston chief governour of Ireland.—Popular and successful.—Envied and opposed by the earl of Ulster.—Suddenly recalled.—Earl of Ulster favoured.—His quarrels with the Geraldines.—He is defeated and taken prisoner.—Reconciliation of the great lords.—Origin of the Scottish invasion.—Edward Bruce invited into Ireland by the northern chieftains.—Lords of the English race summoned to a parliament in England.—Landing of the Scots.—Barbarous progress of Edward Bruce.—Earl of Ulster undertakes the war.—Joined by Fedlim O'Connor.—Bruce practises with Fedlim,—who returns to Connaught.—Earl of Ulster retires before the Scots.—Edward Bruce assumes the style and authority of king of Ireland.—His distress.—Fedlim assisted by the English government against his rival.—Ungratefully deserts to Bruce,—who is crowned at Dundalk.—Joined by his brother,—who suddenly returns to Scotland.—Irish and degenerate English crowd to Edward Bruce.—He reduces Carrickfergus.—Marches southward.—General famine.—Association of the English lords.—Birmingham marches into Connaught.—Battle of Athunree.—The capital threatened by Bruce.—Consternation of the citizens.—Earl of Ulster suspected and seized.—Preparations against Bruce.—He retires into Ulster.—Is not pursued.—Conduct of Mortimer the new chief governor.—English interest revives.—The king and the northern Irish severally apply to the pope.—Horrible distresses of the Scots.—Birmingham marches against them.—Precipitation

of Bruce.—He is defeated and slain.—Miserable consequences of the Scottish war.—Petition for annual Parliaments.—Degeneracy of English families.—Subsidy demanded.—Irish clergy evade the demands of the pope.

THE accession of Edward the second to the throne of England was an event equally fatal to the honour of that realm, and to the welfare and tranquility of Ireland; although the weakness of the new king, and his partiality to an unworthy favourite proved of some momentary service to this country, which might have been permanent and extensive, had not his folly and insincerity been carried even to the utmost degree of infatuation. His sudden dispersion of a gallant army collected by his father to chastise the revolt of Robert Bruce, and his childish retreat from Scotland, taught his own English nobles to despise him: and his shameful breach of promise to a dying parent, by recalling Gaveston from banishment, provoked them to oppose him. The favourite, who received his unmerited honours without temper or discretion, quarrelled with the new queen, and insulted the nobility. A powerful combination, formed and supported by Thomas earl of Lancaster, cousin-german to Edward, peremptorily required the banishment of Gaveston: the bold demand was enforced by the concurrence of a parliament: the king at length yielded with a reluctance arising from a blind passion for his minion, not from a sense of this insult on his authority^d: but instead of dismissing him at once to his native residence in France, he contrived to dignify his exile, by appointing him vicegerent in Ireland,

Ireland, with such powers as might give respect and honour to his governmentⁿ.

THE most criminal, or at least the most obnoxious part of this favourite's character seems to have been an offensive pride and insolence, peculiarly insupportable to the haughty and determined spirit of the English barons. His person was amiable, his endowments graceful and engaging; he was gallant and courageous, to his inferiours liberal and obliging; and in a country where he had as yet made no personal enemies, these qualities shone out with full advantage. A princely port and a magnificent retinue served to captivate the general eye, and raised expectations of some extraordinary effects from his government: and such expectations were speedily confirmed by his conduct. Not like some former deputies, waiting to be insulted in the very seat of government, and shrinking behind the walls of Dublinⁿ, from the violence of neighbouring insurgents, he at once marched out against the turbulent septs, drove them from their retreats, and pursued them with severe execution, until they were completely broken and dispersed. His soldiers, pleased with his valour and gained by his liberalties, followed his standard with the utmost cheerfulness and confidence. An Irish chieftain of no inconsiderable power, called O'DEMPSEY, who had the hardiness to encounter him, was slain on the field of battle: and his forces totally defeated. No insurgents presumed to appear throughout the province of Leinster. He pierced into Thomond, and here confirmed the reputation of his valour, by defeating and subduing the chieftain O'Brien, who had been encouraged to hostilities

lities by the weakness of former administrations, and the frequent disgraces of the English arms : and as he had now no enemy to encounter, he vigorously proceeded to repair the havock made by former insurrections, to erect castles, and open communications through the English territory.

BUT the envy of the great lords of Ireland, and his own insolence and imprudence threatened to interrupt this successful progress^r. A government of weight and splendour seemed to lessen the importance of those barons of the English race, who had been used to look down with contempt upon the king's vicegerent, and if they could not reduce him to become the instrument of their purposes, to prosecute their schemes of private interest with a total disregard of his authority. Richard earl of Ulster in particular was alarmed at the consequence which the new governour assumed. And as he was confessedly the most powerful of the whole body of nobility, and had frequently been treated by the throne as superior to its representative, and one whose influence and power were necessary to the support of Irish government, Gaveston soon learned to regard him as a rival. The governour assumed all the pride and state of superiority. The earl with equal pride and state affected to vie with the governour. His numerous followers were collected, and appeared not only a magnificent, but a formidable body. He held his court at TRIM with a parade and ostentation highly offensive and alarming. He feasted his attendants with all the splendour of a sovereign, and conferred the honour of knighthood on two persons of the family of De Lacey : he is said to have even

even threatened Gaveston with open hostilities. But before their jealousies could produce any violent effect, the favourite was suddenly recalled, and left the kingdom to its usual distresses of a weak government and imperious nobility.

SIR John Wogan who succeeded to the administration^r, was principally employed in holding conventions, and ordaining laws, which the subjects of Ireland were too corrupt to obey, and which their governour had not the power to enforce. While the land was depopulated, and oppressed by every species of outrage, his parliaments were thought worthily employed, in hearing a ridiculous contest for precedence between the prelates of Armagh and Dublin, and deliberating whether a bishop should have his crozier borne erect or depressed, in some particular districts: a point of such serious moment as could not be contested by the parties without violence and bloodshed^x; and in which the king of England himself was obliged to moderate. The great lords, in the mean time enjoyed the full advantage of a feeble and despised government. They avowed their contempt of the royal authority, and carried on their private wars without fear or controul. The earl of Ulster had lately received a new and honourable mark of Edward's confidence. He had been appointed plenipotentiary to conclude a treaty with Robert Bruce^a; and the Scottish deputies had attended him in Ireland; giddy with exaltation, and intoxicated by flattery, he spurned at all restraints; and with the insolence of independent sovereignty marched into Thomond in support of some pretensions which he disdained to assert but by force of

^r Campion. ^x Rymer, t. III. p. 86.

^a Rymer, t. III. p. 150.

of arms^r. Here he had the mortification to receive a signal defeat from the Geraldines, commanded by Richard de Clare. He was made prisoner, with several of his most distinguished adherents: and obliged to submit to such terms as the conquerors imposed. Their accommodation was cemented by the marriage of Maurice, and Thomas Fitz-John, afterwards the heads of the illustrious houses of Desmond and Kildare, to two daughters of the earl of Ulster. And the union of these noble families seemed to promise lasting tranquillity to Ireland, at the moment when new enemies and new disorders were on the point of reducing this unhappy country, to an extremity of distress beyond all its former sufferings.

THE dominion gained over Scotland by Edward the first, the most distinguished acquisition of his illustrious reign, had been exercised by this austere prince with that severity, which hastened the revolt of a spirited and warlike people. Not yet broken by the ill success of WALLACE, and exasperated at the ignominious execution of this their renowned partizan, they were impatient to shake off the yoke of English government, and found a new and more fortunate leader in ROBERT BRUCE^r, son to that Robert who had been competitor for the crown. The ardour of this young champion had just received the mortification of a signal defeat; when the death of Edward, in that critical moment when Scotland was to be overwhelmed by a numerous army, converted his precipitate revolt into a judicious and well-directed effort for the deliverance of his country. He issued from the Western Isles, whither he had been driven by

by his misfortunes, and soon became a terror to his enemies. Edward the second pursued the method dictated by his indolence and weakness, and to stop his progress, entered into a treaty with the Scottish prince, which (as just now hath been observed) was transacted in Ireland by the earl of Ulster, and ended in a truce, which afforded Robert a favourable interval for consolidating his power; was soon violated; war recommenced; and the contest finally decided in favour of the gallant Bruce by the victory of Bannockbourn.

THE successful progress of this young warrior, and his victorious acquisition of the crown of Scotland were events by no means unnoticed in Ireland. They were heard with wonder and delight by those natives, who considered themselves allied in consanguinity to the ALBANIAN SCOTS^r, as they were styled; and of consequence peculiarly interested in their fortunes. They despised the weakness of the English prince; but were mortified at the reflection, that they alone had not seized the advantage of a contemptible and indolent reign in England to shake off the yoke which had oppressed them, so long and so severely. The chieftains of Ulster in particular, grew impatient to take the advantage of the present state of Britain; and as their situation made it easier to hold a correspondence with Scotland, they addressed themselves to Robert Bruce, who still pursued his advantage, and ravaged the northern parts of England without controul. They pathetically represented the distresses of their country; enlarged on the injuries they had sustained; painted the insolence and oppression of their invaders in the most offensive

five colours; entreating his assistance for an unhappy people, brethren and kinsmen to the Scots, who wanted but such a leader to execute their vengeance upon the common enemy; and who, rather than languish under their present miseries, were ready to receive a sovereign from Scotland, and pay due allegiance to a prince who had valour to rescue them from slavery, and equity to receive and treat them as his subjects.

THE genius of Robert was naturally formed for bold and adventurous enterprizes; and success had enflamed the ambition of his youth. Edward his brother had attended him in all his fortunes, and was distinguished by vigour and intrepidity. Scarcely had Robert been invested with the royal dignity of Scotland, when this aspiring young lord boldly demanded, as the just reward of his services, to be admitted to an equal share in his authority. A requisition evidently dictated by a turbulent and ambitious spirit, was justly alarming to a prince scarcely confirmed in his throne, and sensible of the dreadful consequence of any civil commotion or insurrection. Edward was for the present apparently satisfied by being declared and recognized heir apparent to the crown. But Robert, wisely considering the necessity of finding employment for the active temper of his brother, presented to his ambition the flattering prospect of a new kingdom; urged him to take advantage of the present disposition of the Irish lords, and assured him of such effectual support as could not fail to exterminate his rivals, and seat him on the throne of Ireland. Edward was transported at this overture, and at once consented to the enterprize.

The

The chieftains of Ulster were assured that this lord should speedily be sent to their deliverance with a considerable force. The intelligence was spread through their province, every where received with joy, and the way prepared for a dangerous and extensive insurrection.

THE impatience of young Edward^A is said to have driven him to a precipitate and injudicious attempt upon the Northern coast of Ireland, before a sufficient force could be provided for his enterprize, or his Irish partizans prepared to declare in favour of his cause. The attempt, which was speedily repelled, should have given the alarm to an active and vigilant government: and lord Edmund Butler, now deputy to the king of England, actually proceeded to take measures for the defence and security of the realm. But the perpetual remonstrances made to the king of the partial and irregular administration of justice, the degeneracy of the English, and the other manifold disorders of Ireland, induced him to commission John de Hothom^B, a clergyman in whom he placed peculiar confidence, to confer with the great lords on the state and circumstances of this kingdom^C. By his advice, as well as that of some of the great officers of state, Richard earl of Ulster, the lords Edmund Butler and Theobald de Verdun, noblemen of distinguished eminence, and whose presence in Ireland was absolutely necessary upon any critical or alarming emergency, were summoned to parliament in England, to treat (as is expressed in the writ) with the king, his prelates, and nobles, about the affairs of Ireland, *and other of the king's arduous and urgent concerns*^D. Happily

^A Cox. ^B Rym. t. iii. p. 492. ^C A. D. 1314. ^D Ib. 499. Prynn.

pily they returned early in the ensuing spring : and we find lord Edmund Butler, the chancellor, and the treasurer of Ireland, instructed to deliver the result of their deliberation, not only to the prelates, nobles, and magistrates, but to the principal chieftains of the Irish race^r ; whom the king directs to give due credence to his commissioners, and to assist in executing the schemes devised for the general interest, little suspecting the inveterate aversion harboured by these chieftains, or the pestilent designs now ripening to execution.

ON the twenty-fifth day of May^o, in the year one thousand three hundred and fifteen, lord Edward Bruce appeared on the North-eastern coast of Ireland, and, from a fleet of three hundred barks, landed six thousand hardy Scots, to assert his claim to the sovereignty of this kingdom. The Irish lords of Ulster who had invited and encouraged him to this enterprize, were now prepared to receive their new monarch, flocked with eagerness to his standard, bound themselves by solemn treaty to his service, delivered their hostages, and marched under his command to wreak their vengeance upon the common enemy. The barbarous policy of the Scot, which obliged him to strike terror into all his opponents, and the desperate resentment of the Irish, conspired to mark their progress by desolation and carnage. The English settlers of the North were butchered without mercy, or driven from their fairest possessions in a moment ; their castles levelled to the ground, and their towns set on fire. Dundalk, Atherdee, and other places of less note, felt the utmost fury of these merciless ravagers ; the same of
whose

whose progress soon reached the most distant quarters of the island, and was received with triumph and exultation by all the enemies of English government, though the Western and Southern chieftains had not as yet taken arms in favour of the Scottish prince.

THE English lords who should have opposed this dangerous invasion^a, were neither cordially united, by their common danger, nor duly prepared to repel it. Richard earl of Ulster, indeed, rose up with such forces as he could collect, in defence of his possessions. He summoned his vassals to attend him at Roscommon; from whence, marching to Athlone, he was here joined by Fedlim O'Connor, the Irish prince of Connaught, with his provincial troops. So that, issuing forth through the territory of Meath, he entered the Northern province, wasting and desolating the districts which he traversed, to supply the necessities of his army. Butler, the lord deputy, at the same time, exerted his diligence to collect the troops of Leinster, and joined the earl with a considerable reinforcement. But Richard, whose declining vigour was supplied by a proud and imperious spirit, and who had been accustomed to treat the king's vicegerent as his inferiour, disdained this assistance, declared that his own troops were more than sufficient to repel the Scots, and punish their adherents; advising the deputy to return to the seat of government, and confine his attention to the security of Leinster. Lord Edmund readily acquiesced; and the conduct of this war was entrusted solely to earl Richard.

BUT

BUT the prosecution of the war by no means corresponded with his magnificent promises : and the operations on both sides were indeed necessarily retarded by a season of remarkable dearth and distress, which had been felt through all the British islands. Bruce in the first ardour of success had advanced into the county of Louth. The earl followed ; but without coming to a decisive action, skirmished with the enemy. Bruce thus harrassed, and oppressed by intolerable scarcity of provisions, followed the advice of his chief associate, O'Nial of Tirowen, and retreated into Ulster. The earl pursued ; and we are told, that after some inconsiderable actions, a general battle was fought near Coleraine, which ended in the discomfiture of Richard. However this may be, the advantage could not be effectually improved, nor was the earl prevented from carrying on the war. Bruce was therefore obliged to recur to artifice and secret negotiation, in order to weaken and divide the forces of his enemy.

FEDLIM, the Irish prince of Connaught^a, who had united with the earl of Ulster, was a youth of about twenty-two years, distinguished by a military genius, spirited, and inexperienced. His present connexion had been formed merely to secure his provincial interests, and to defend him against the attempts of factious rivals. The flattering idea of glory, and the pride of ancestry, were still predominant in his mind, and rendered him a proper object for the artifice of Bruce. To him the Scottish prince secretly applied : he represented his present union as highly dishonourable to his station, and injurious to his country : he reminded

^a Camden.

^b Lib. Clonmacnoise, MS.

reminded him of the power and possessions which his ancestors had enjoyed, before the usurpations of the English had confined the princely family of Connaught within the narrowest and most inglorious limits : he entreated him no longer to turn his arms inconsiderately against those who were come to deliver him and his countrymen from oppression and usurpation ; promising to reinstate him in the province of Connaught in as ample a manner as any of his most distinguished predecessors had enjoyed it, provided he would desert the English interest, and unite with his northern friends, as soon as it could be effected with safety to himself, and advantage to the common cause.

THE young Irish prince listened to these overtures with eagerness, and soon found more than a plausible pretence to detach himself from the earl of Ulster. His absence from his own territory had produced the effect usually experienced by the Irish toparchs ; and encouraged Roderic, one of his factious kinsmen, to endeavour to supplant him. The partizans of this leader were collected ; his opponents readily subdued ; and thus seizing the Irish district of Connaught, he entered into a negotiation with Edward Bruce, promising to expel the English from the whole province, if he were acknowledged as the rightful prince, and supported in the honours and possessions he had now acquired. Bruce readily accepted his services, and received him as his ally ; representing at the same time the extreme folly and danger of division, entreating him to leave the possessions of Fedlim unmolested, and to suspend the discussion of all particular claims and pretensions, till the common enemy should be first subdued, and the restoration

of general peace might allow them to be decided with due temper and propriety.

RODERIC, little influenced by this counselⁿ, continued to augment his forces, to harrafs the partizans of his rival, to raze and burn down their towns, until he had obliged the several septs to acknowledge his sovereignty, and to give hostages for their faithful attachment to his interest; so that Fedlim was obliged to propose to the earl of Ulster, to march with his whole army into Connaught to expel this injurious usurper. Although the northern enemy were too formidable to permit the earl to comply with this overture, yet he could not, with any appearance of equity, detain the Irish chieftain from his immediate interests. Fedlim was dismissed with his provincials, amusing the earl with flattering assurances of an immediate return, when the disorders of his territory should be once composed. But the Irish prince was soon convinced that the progress of his rival had been too long neglected, and that his power was now too firmly established. The northern Irish, unacquainted with his secret transactions with Bruce, and regarding him as a pestilent enemy, harrafsed him incessantly through his whole march; and no sooner had he reached a place of safety, than he had the mortification to find it necessary to dismiss his weakened and dispirited followers.

HE was soon followed into Connaught by the earl of Ulster and the remaining part of his army. This dismembered body had been obliged to retire before the northern and Scottish forces: nor could the leader secure his retreat without considerable
loss.

loss. As the general distress of famine prevented Bruce from pursuing his advantage, after some ineffectual progress, he again retired; and as the forces raised by the English government shared in this distress, he remained in Ulster unmolested, assuming the parade of royalty, holding his courts of judicature, and affecting all the state and business of a sovereign, till new incidents enabled him to act a more vigorous and important part.

ON the arrival of the earl of Ulster in Connaught, the party which espoused the cause of Fedlim immediately assembled in full confidence that their chieftain would now receive effectual support. But the shattered remains of a disgraced and discomfited army could but enable them to make a predatory war upon their antagonist, and to aggravate the distresses of the province, already worn out by pestilence and famine; till the arrival of Sir John Bermingham, a valiant and distinguished commander, with a select body of English forces, enabled Fedlim to meet his rival in the field. An engagement, which ended in the total defeat and death of Roderic, reinstated Fedlim in his possessions, as well as in the dignity of an Irish prince: and as gratitude had no place in his mind, the very first use made of his re-establishment, was to declare openly and zealously in favour of the Scottish interest, and to draw the sword against his deliverers. The example was instantly followed by O'Brien of Thomond, and other Irish chieftains of Munster and Meath. Industrious agents were every where employed to foment the spirit of insurrection. The clergy extolled Bruce as the protector and deliverer of their country; inveighed bitterly

bitterly against the English government, and exhorted the ignorant laity to take up arms against the enemies of the church and the oppressors of the people. To improve these favourable impressions, Edward Bruce was solemnly crowned at Dundalk. To enable him to support his dignity^c, his brother Robert landed in Ireland with a powerful army; and although the general dearth and severity of the season obliged him to return before he could perform any distinguished service, yet that part of his forces which he left behind him was no inconsiderable reinforcement to his brother; and was still further encreased by a conflux of discontented Irish, together with numbers of degenerate English, and among these the Lacies and their numerous followers^r. The town of Carrickfergus, which had long supported the most vigorous assaults of the Scottish troops, and patiently endured the most afflicting want and distress, now surrendered to Bruce; who, quitting his desolated quarters in the remoter districts of Ulster, marched southward with a barbarous army, enflamed to madness by the violent cravings of nature, and prepared to glut their frantic malice, and allay the rage of hunger by the bloodiest hostilities and most ruthless depredations.

IN the mean time the English lords, alarmed at the danger of their own lands and possessions, as well as that of the realm, proceeded to the most effectual measures in their power to repel the invasions with which they were threatened, both from Connaught and from Ulster. Amidst the treacherous revolts of many English subjects, and some of considerable note, the allegiance of all became

became in some degree suspicious^v. Several of the most distinguished lords had therefore entered into an association to support the interests of king Edward with their lives and fortunes, and gave hostages to Hotham, his commissioner, as a surety for their faith and allegiance. To enliven and propagate this spirit of loyalty, the royal favour was extended to the most deserving and distinguished amongst them. John Fitz-Thomas, baron of O'Phaly, was created earl of Kildare^r: lord Edmond Butler received the title of earl of Carrick. The chiefs of the noble houses of Desmond and Kildare^p exerted themselves with particular vigour, and took a principal part in the conduct of the war and the provisions necessary for the public defence. At the same time that they made such preparations as were in their power, to repel the irruptions of the Scots, an army was detached into Connaught, under the command of William de Burgho, brother to the earl of Ulster, and Richard de Bermingham, to chastise the insolence of Fedlim O'Connor. This chieftain had seconded the efforts of Edward Bruce, by many spirited irruptions on the English settlements. Stephen of Exeter, Milo Cogan, William Pendergast, John Staunton, and other gallant knights, had been surprised and slain in his incursions^x. But he soon found himself encountered by an army which required all his power and vigour to withstand. His forces were collected; and, with the spirit of a warlike young chieftain, he marched against his formidable invaders. The contending parties met near the town of Athunree, where a desperate engagement was at length determined in favour of the English

VOL. I.

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army;

^v Rymer, t. iii. p. 546.
^d Davis.

^r Cha. 9, Ed. II.
^x Lib. Clonmacnoise, MS.

army; and Fedlim ended his short career by falling upon the field of battle. The loss of the Irish in this action is magnified to eight thousand men. And the number was certainly considerable; for even the Irish writers declare, that no engagement had ever been so bloody and so decisive from the time of the first English invasion.

THE fall of his Irish confederate of Connaught seemed to have little influence on the operations of Edward Bruce; who proceeded in his enterprise, and continued his destructive progress, without restraint or molestation, to the very walls of Dublin^a. Hither the earl of Ulster had retired; and in this time of fear and suspicion, his former inactive and inglorious conduct added to the circumstance of his sister being married to Robert king of Scotland, raised such apprehensions of his secret disloyalty, that the chief magistrate of the city seized and imprisoned him; nor could all the authority of English government immediately effect his enlargement. Bruce was now at hand, to encrease the terror and consternation of the citizens. They set fire to the suburbs with such precipitation, that their cathedral did not escape the fury of the flames; and retiring within their walls, made such preparations for a vigorous defence, that the Scottish prince deemed it expedient to turn aside towards the territory of Kildare; through which he marched with the most terrifying execution, under the direction of Walter de Lacey, who had, but just now, solemnly disavowed all connection with the Scot, and renewed his oath of allegiance to the crown of England. He traversed the territory of Ossory, pierced into Munster,

and

and continued his ravages, not like a gallant conquerer, but a savage driven on furiously by hunger and necessity.

IN this time of distress and confusion, the friends of English government abandoned to their own resources, in an exhausted country^r, surrounded by secret enemies, and every where harrassed by petty depredations, could not without the utmost difficulty collect a force sufficient to stop the progress of the Scot. An army said to consist of thirty thousand, including a vast number of irregular, unprovided, and ineffective men, was at length assembled at Kilkenny. The Geraldines, who had now forgotten all their private jealousies and contests with other noble families, prepared to march out against the ravager, when intelligence arrived, that Roger Mortimer of Wigmore, (a nobleman who, in right of his wife, claimed large possessions in Meath, and who is said by some historians to have already taken a part in the present war, and to have been defeated by Bruce) had arrived at Youghal, with a train of about forty knights and their attendants, to take upon him the administration of government; and was on his march to join the main body. The motions of his enemies were not unknown to Bruce; who, conscious of his own real weakness, determined to avoid an engagement. His only resource was to lead his harrassed army back to Ulster. By forced marches they arrived in Meath, unmolested; and halting for some days in the neighbourhood of Trim, from thence proceeded to their northern quarters.

THE English forces were unable to pursue the enemy through a desolated country to a remote corner of the islandⁿ. The new governour therefore dismissed his army, repaired to Dublin, convened the nobles to deliberate on the measures necessary to be taken, and, with their concurrence, prevailed on the magistracy to release the earl of Ulster from his confinement. Thence proceeding to Meath, he endeavoured to compose the disorders of this district, and particularly to reduce the proud and rebellious family of de Lacey. They were formally summoned to appear and defend themselves against the charge of a treasonable intercourse with the king's enemies. But instead of abiding a judicial examination; they treated the summons as an indignity to their grandeur, and slew the messenger by whom it was delivered. To revenge this outrage, their lands were invaded, ravaged, and seized, and they themselves driven for shelter into Connaught, where they waited a favourable opportunity to unite once more with their Scottish ally.

THE chief employment of the governour was now to repress the Irish insurgents of Leinster, to regulate this province, to correct the abuses of former administrations, and to apply the most effectual remedies in his power to the manifold distresses which the English subjects had long experienced, as well as the Irish natives. The English interest seemed to revive under a spirited and well supported government, while the affairs of the invaders became every day more desperate^c. The sentence of excommunication was thundered from the papal chair against all the enemies of king Edward.

ⁿ Ibid.

^c Rymer, t. III. p. 619.

Edward. Robert and Edward Bruce were excommunicated by name. The same dreadful sentence was denounced against the Irish clergy of every order, who had preached with so much zeal to excite their countrymen to insurrection. This interposition of the pontiff had been expected; and to guard against it, those Irish who had united with the Scots had the precaution to dispatch their emissaries to Rome with an affecting remonstrance presented in the name of O'Nial^d, on the present state of their nation, and the cruel hardships they had long endured from English government. They recited the conditions on which Adrian had first permitted Henry the second to enter into Ireland. Far from shewing the least attention to these, both he and his successors, they alledged, had loaded the natives with unheard-of afflictions and oppressions, reducing them to a state of intolerable slavery: in which they had long remained without compassion or redress; till, no longer able to endure the severity of their sufferings, they had been forced to withdraw themselves from the dominion of England, and to invite another power to the government of their realm. And such was the effect of this remonstrance upon the pope, that soon after the sentences of excommunication were promulged, he transmitted it to king Edward, attended with an earnest exhortation, to weigh the complaint, and to redress their grievances; that so the Irish who had taken arms in favour of the Scottish prince might be induced to return to their allegiance, or be left without excuse, should they persist in their revolt.

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THIS application doth not appear to have been attended, nor in the present state of things could it be attended, with any immediate consequences. In the mean time the distresses of Edward Bruce, in his state of inactive retirement, rose to a degree of suffering, horrible to be related. A country desolated by famine, pestilence, and war, afforded no subsistence to his wretched followers. Every miserable provision for the necessities of life had been exhausted by their repeated excursions. They daily fell in great numbers, under the oppression of disease and famine. Their carcases, we are assured, became the subsistence of the wretched survivors. The hideous incident is related, not only without the least expression of sensibility, but with such hardened indifference, and a folly so provoking, that it is imputed as a judgment on their enormous offence of eating meat in Lentⁿ. In those parts of the kingdom where agriculture had not been totally interrupted, the return of a fruitful season proved a critical relief, and enabled the English to resume their military operations^r. A defeat, which they had sustained in Thomond, and which had been attended with considerable loss, obliged them to take vigorous measures to repair the misfortune, and to maintain their interest in this province. The northern enemies, however, were by no means neglected. On the return of Mortimer into England, the archbishops of Cashel and of Dublin were successively deputed to the administration. This latter prelate assigned the command of the forces destined against the Scots to Sir John Bermingham, who marched into Ulster with several distinguished officers in his train, and about fifteen hundred chosen troops.

Bruce,

Bruce, after all his losses, had still an army more than double of this number : and weakened and disordered as they were, the romantic valour of their leader, was still confident and violent. He is said to have received advice that his brother Robert was on the point of coming to his assistance^x, and jealous of admitting him to share his military honours, purposedly hastened his march to decide the contest by his own prowess^v. The two parties met near Dundalk ; the Scots and their associates, animated by the hopes of putting an happy end to their distresses, encouraged by the impetuous valour of their leader, and relying on their superiour numbers, were impatient to encounter an enemy, who had often fled before them. The English conducted by an able general, well provided and appointed, were equally impatient to exterminate those invaders who had so severely harassed and distressed the whole nation. The prelate of Armagh, a zealous partizan of the English interests, went through their ranks^r, exhorting them to behave with due valour against the enemies of their nation, and the merciless ravagers of their possessions ; distributing his benedictions, and pronouncing absolution on all those who should fall in a cause so just and honourable. The conflict was violent, and sustained on each side with equal bravery ; but at length decided against the enfeebled northerns. The body of Maupas, a brave English knight, who had rushed into the ranks to encounter Edward Bruce, was found stretched on that of his antagonist, who had fallen by his arm^v. Robert Bruce arrived with his forces only to hear of the defeat of his unhappy brother, and instantly retired. The English leader when he had first expelled

expelled O'Nial^r, the chief supporter of the Scots, from his territory of Tirowen, led back his victorious troops, and soon after received the earldom of Louth, and manor of Atherdee, as the reward of his distinguished services.

SUCH was the event of this Scottish invasion; an enterprize rashly undertaken by an aspiring young prince, who for almost three years had pursued the wild scheme of his ambition, through danger and calamity, involving the nation, which he sought to govern, in greater distress than a distressed and afflicted nation had experienced for ages; and closing the bloody roll of those his madness had destroyed, by his own untimely end. Unhappily for Ireland, the calamities, which this war had introduced, were of such a kind as could not cease with their immediate cause. The dismal effects of war, especially in a country circumstanced as Ireland was at this time, are not to be estimated solely by the troops lost in battle, or the towns taken: those which history deigns not to record were yet more afflicting and extensive. The oppression exercised with impunity in every particular district; the depredations every where committed among the inferiour orders of the people, not by open enemies alone, but those who called themselves friends and protectors, and who justified their outrages by the plea of lawful authority; their avarice and cruelty, their plundering and massacres, were still more ruinous than the defeat of an army, or the loss of a city. The wretched sufferers had neither power to repel, nor law to restrain or vindicate their injuries. In times of general commotion, laws the most wisely framed and

and most equitably administred, are but of little moment. But now the very source of public justice was corrupted and poisoned. The distinction maintained between the Irish foedary and the English subject, and the different modes of jurisdiction by which each was governed, every day demonstrated, by its miserable effects, the iniquity of those who had favoured this horrid and infatuated policy,

THE murder of an Irishman was punishable only by a fine^c; a slight restraint on the rage of insolence and rapine; while the murder of an Englishman was a capital offence in the Irish native. On the other hand, the Englishman who robbed or plundered one of his own countrymen was condemned to death: the Irishman convicted of the like crimes was remitted to his Brehon, who might allow him to compound for his offence: an indulgence which tempted numbers of disordered English to renounce their name and nation, to adopt the manners, and conform to the wretched polity of the natives; and produced a dangerous relaxation and abuse even in the English tribunals. The judges, either by the force of pernicious example, or from the necessity of a distempered state, assumed an authority of compounding by fine even for the crimes of robbery and homicide; which encreased the number of delinquents, and gave full scope to their lawless violence, confident that a sum of money could atone for their excesses, and leave them at full liberty to wreak the bloodiest vengeance on their accusers. This evil was so severely felt during the Scottish war, that the Irish council represented the pernicious innovation to the king

king of England, with all its dreadful consequences, earnestly petitioning that no pardon or redemption for any murder or robbery of an English subject should be granted, but in full parliament^T; and for this purpose particularly, that a parliament should be held in Ireland once in every year. And there is authority for asserting that an ordinance was made in consequence of this application, and in full compliance with the request.

BUT whatever salutary institutions might be ordained, a general disinclination in the people to obey them, and too good grounds to hope for impunity in their neglect or resistance, proved sufficient to defeat their good effects. Such was the blind rage with which the degenerate English rushed into the excesses of rapine, that they renounced their rights as subjects, at the imminent danger of their lives, which were thus rendered more precarious and defenceless; and even the Irish, who were denizenized, could not at once divest themselves of prejudice and habit. They were astonished to find, that felony was to be punished capitally, and absolutely refused obedience to so severe a jurisdiction^N. So that a special ordinance was made in the fourteenth year of Edward the second, that all the Irish who had received, or should receive, charters of denization, were for the future to be strictly obedient to the English laws in this particular instance.

BUT neither a lawless disposition in the people to be governed, nor any irregular and partial execution of justice in the ministers, who appear to have

^T Coke 4 Inst. MS. Lamb. G. G. G. p. 48.

^N Pryn. Anim. p. 263.

have been at this time notoriously corrupt and insufficient^r, were the only evils which had arisen during the course of this unhappy war ; for the support whereof, as Davis observes, “ the revenue “ of the land was far too short, and yet no supply “ of treasure was sent out of England.” The compendious Irish method of quartering the soldiers on the inhabitants, and leaving them to support themselves by arbitrary exactions, seemed to have been pointed out by the urgent occasion, was adopted with alacrity, and executed with rigour. Riot, rapine, massacre, and all the tremendous effects of anarchy, were the natural consequences. Every inconsiderable party, who, under pretence of loyalty, received the king’s commission to repel the adversary in some particular district, became pestilent enemies to the inhabitants. Their properties, their lives, the chastity of their families, were all exposed to barbarians, who fought only to glut their brutal passions ; and by their horrible excesses, saith the annalist, purchased the curse of God and man^x. The English freeholder abandoned his lands rather than endure the burden of impositions intolerably severe, attended with such dreadful circumstances of outrage : he fled to the haunts of the Irish insurgents, connected and allied himself with these, learned their language and manners, and marched out with them against the common enemy ; while his lands were resumed by the barbarous natives as their original and rightful property.

THE same method of arbitrary exactionsⁿ (or *coyne* and *livery*, as it was called) for the maintenance of the soldiery, was also adopted by lords of considerable

derable note and consequence ; and particularly, began at this time to be exercised with great severity by Maurice Fitz-Thomas of Desmond. His ministers of rapine, in a short time, banished all the English settlers from the counties of Kerry, Limerick, Cork, and Waterford ; whose lands were seized by the followers of this lord, a mixed rabble, mostly of the Irish race, and all infected with the most pernicious part of Irish manners. Desmond himself, saith Sir John Davis, taking what scopes he best liked for his demesnes in every country, and reserving an Irish seniory out of the rest.

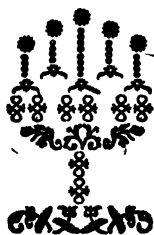
POSSESSIONS thus acquired could not be maintained by the just and equitable law of England, whose sentence must have dispossessed the usurpers, and restored the rightful owners to their lands. Maurice and his partizans had therefore but one method to secure their present acquisitions, an utter renunciation of English law and government. He degenerated into an Irish chieftain, and supported a barbarous state over all his followers : they soon united into one mass, English and Irish equally disdaining all salutary discipline and polity, and sinking into the utmost rudeness of manners ; knowing and acknowledging no other power but that of their immediate chieftain. The pernicious example was followed by other lords : for the power and influence thus acquired by Maurice was an enviable object. In various quarters of the island, the more powerful of the English race, by the same arbitrary exactions and oppressions, banished the inhabitants, and erected themselves into independent sovereigns. The discontented natives were thus encouraged to rise up in arms, even in

the territories of Leinster, when the English settlers had been driven either into their native country, or to the Irish septs^a. The only measure taken in the distractions of England, and the weakness of Irish government, was that of enacting some futile ordinances against those impositions which had been the cause of all this disorder, without power to enforce obedience.

IN a country where the English interest was thus sensibly declining, one would imagine that few resources could be found or sought, for the necessities of England. Yet the weak and injudicious attempt on Scotland, in the year one thousand three hundred and twenty-two, was made the pretence for calling off those forces from Ireland, which should have been employed against domestic enemies. And the pope, with a composed insensibility to the distresses of a distant country, granted to king Edward a tenth of all the English revenues in Ireland for two years. The laity were duly obedient, and led their troops into Scotland. The clergy were more refractory. They might have pleaded the general distress of their nation, and their own total inability. But they had to deal with those who were not to be influenced by arguments of reason and equity. They had therefore recourse to evasion: they demanded the pope's original bull; and as this was not produced, they refused to pay the subsidy.

THE disordered state of England, which had encouraged this spirit of disobedience, and aggravated, if not originally occasioned all the distresses of Ireland, ended at length in the ruin of the weak

weak and wretched Edward ; who, in the extremity of distress, made a fruitless effort to throw himself into the arms of his Irish subjects. Had he gained this island, the horrible catastrophe of his death might have been prevented ; and even his disposition at least suspended. But the triumph of his enemies was complete. Among the articles of accusation urged against the king, they insulted him with the loss of his dominions in Ireland, as if this were not more justly chargeable to their own perfidy and rebellion.



C H A P. IV.

Present disorders of Ireland similar to those of England.—Attempt to establish a seat of learning in Dublin.—Disorders from malice and superstition. State of Ireland on the accession of Edward the third.—Pride and contention of the English families.—The king interposes.—Irish of Leinster petition for a general denization,—but without effect.—They rise in arms under the leading of O'Brien.—Their progress.—Their cruelty.—Repelled by the citizens of Wexford.—Maurice Fitz-Thomas invited to serve against the Irish enemy.—Created earl of Desmond.—His exactions.—His power.—Pernicious grants of Palatinates.—O'Brien still in arms.—Vigour of Sir Anthony Lucey.—Secret abettors of the enemy seized.—William Bermingham executed.—Edward declares a design of visiting Ireland.—Preparations for his expedition.—His real purpose.—His expedition to Scotland.—Treaties with the Irish enemy.—Assassination of the earl of Ulster.—Fatal consequences of this event.—Irruptions of O'Nial.—Mac-William.—Loyalty and zeal of the Geraldines.—Edward provoked at the disorders of Ireland.—Rigorous edicts.—All of Irish birth disqualified to hold offices.—Irish subjects dangerously incensed.—Sir John Morris chief governour despised.—Convention of Kilkenny.—Spirited remonstrance and petition to the throne favourably received.

THE disorders of Ireland which had gradually increased and extended through the English settlements, and been felt in all their severity from

the Scottish invasion, dispose us to regard the collection of inhabitants, both of the English and Irish race, as remarkably barbarous beyond the example of their cotemporaries in any other part of Europe. The gloomy prospect is not relieved by any great and striking objects; by revolutions, foreign expeditions, important victories, or extensive conquests. The attention is painfully confined to the worst and most odious part of human conduct, which in times of civility and refinement must be considered, and ought to be represented, with abhorrence. But it must be observed, for it may be of use in guarding against national prejudice and partialities, that the internal disorders of England during the same period were not only as grievous, but precisely of the same kind, and derived from the same sources with those which strike us so forcibly in Ireland.

THE estate of an English baron was managed by his bailiffs, and cultivated by his villains; its produce was consumed in rustic hospitality by the baron and his officers; a number of idle retainers, ready for any mischief or disorder, were maintained by him: all who lived upon his estate were absolutely at his disposal. Instead of applying to courts of justice, he usually sought redress by open force and violence. The great nobility were, a kind of independent potentates, who, if they submitted to any regulations at all, were less governed by the municipal law, than by a rude species of the law of nations.

THIS is the description of an admired English historianⁿ: and if we were to delineate the manners

ners of the most unrefined Irish sept^s, we might fairly adopt the very same terms. Add to this the vices of the English nobility, which the same writer enumerates, in the reign of Edward the third, the outrages and intolerable abuse of purveyance, the interruption of the course of law from grants of franchises and immunities, levying exorbitant fines, unjust pardoning of criminals^r, confederacies formed by great lords in mutual support of their iniquity, and the numberless robberies, murders, and ravishments committed by their retainers; and the whole picture both of the English and the native inhabitants of Ireland, is exactly delineated. Their vices were odious; but they were the vices of the time, not the excesses of some peculiarly odious individuals. These rushed forward with their neighbours in the course of corruption, and were, if possible, less unpardonable, as their temptations were stronger, and the government they insulted^r less respectable. If a vigorous and renowned monarch could not restrain the excesses of a licentious nobility, what should be expected from the weak and unsupported administration of an Irish deputy?

SOME few prelates of Ireland laboured^r, with a spirit becoming their reverend function, to give a check to the vices and disorders of the realm, by the introduction of that which in their days was esteemed civility, and that which was honoured as learning. Two successive archbishops of Dublin had, in the reign of Edward the second, laboured to establish an university in Dublin, not only for the study of theology, but that of the civil and canon law, then a fashionable part of literature

VOL. I.

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^r Ibid. p. 234, 237.^r Reg. Alan. MS.

in Europe. The pontificate to which they applied made no difficulty to grant their suit; and archbishop Bricknor actually proceeded in the year thirteen hundred and twenty to erect and model an academical body in this city, in which degrees were conferred, and studies so long continued, that Edward the third enlarged the original endowment, and by special writ, granted his protection and safe-conduct to the students, thirty-eight years after the first establishment of this seminary. But the penetration of its founder was not equal to his zeal. He chose the most unfavourable season for his undertaking, when every part of the island was remarkably distressed and disordered. The institution languished for some years amidst commotion and anarchy, and at length expired.

AND at the very time when this upright and ingenuous prelate was exerting himself for the improvement and refinement of his country, the cause of ignorance and barbarism was not without its abettors, even among his own order. Richard Ledred bishop of Ossory, a man of violent passions, and a proud and vindictive spirit, contrived, from what private motive or provocation doth not appear, to raise such confusion in his diocese as soon engaged the attention of the whole island. A woman of some distinction^a, called Alice Ketler, with her son and some of her dependents, were accused of witchcraft in his spiritual court. One of these dependents was condemned and executed, the son confined in prison; the lady, though the charge could not be clearly established against her, yet, on a new accusation of heresy, was tried, convicted, and condemned to the flames. Arnold
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^a Excerpt. ex Ann. Clyn. MS.

de la Poer, one of the magistrates of Kilkenny, who espoused the cause of these unhappy culprits, was also charged with heresy by the bishop; he appealed to the chief justice, the prior of Kilmainham, who countenanced and protected him: the insolent prelate instantly extended his accusation to the justice, who now found it difficult to secure himself, and left his wretched client de la Poer to expire in prison. A new weapon was thus found to execute the private revenge of individuals, and aggravate the public calamities. Heresy was a word of horror, even to those who were every day breaking through the most sacred bonds of religion and humanity. The oppressor, the ravager, the murderer, was zealous to approve himself a true son of the church, and to execute her vengeance on all her enemies^r. Adam Duff, a man of a considerable Irish family in Leinster, was seized and burnt for heresy. His offence was aggravated by a charge of horrid and senseless blasphemy; just as Ketler had her sacramental wafer impressed with the devil's name, and an ointment to convert her staff into a witch's vehicle. At length, the mischief, thus spread abroad, reverted upon its author. The bishop of Ossory himself was by his metropolitan formally accused of heresy, and obliged to make a precipitate retreat, and to appeal to the apostolic see, leaving his country free from the miserable consequences of folly and superstition operating in favour of personal animosity and revenge.

IN the mean time^d, both the great lords of the English race, and the Irish chieftains, on the accession of Edward the third, pursued their several

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schemes

^r Campion. Camden.^d A. D. 1327.

schemes of private interest or ambition, without regard to the royal authority^r, much less to the delegated power of an Irish chief governour. Thomas Fitz-John, earl of Kildare, had been constituted lord justice of Ireland: and the first symptoms of disorder appeared in the total neglect of his authority, and the insolent affectation of independence in several of the English lords. Kildare, with becoming spirit, endeavoured to make them sensible of his authority; and when his efforts were not sufficiently effectual, represented his situation to the king, and the distress to which he was exposed in his administration, by the insolence of some distinguished subjects of the realm^p. This produced a letter from Edward to Maurice of Desmond, the earl of Louth, James Butler, Maurice Rochford, and John de la Poer, strictly enjoining them on their allegiance, and at their peril, to pay due obedience and submission to his chief governour, and to concur with him in preservation of the general peace and interests of the crown.

BUT the royal mandate was of little moment when Maurice of Desmond had received a personal affront. De la Poer had presumed to call him in contempt THE RYMER, an offence not to be expiated but by a bloody war^r. Maurice, with his associates, Butler and Bermingham, immediately took the field against de la Poer and his confederate de Burgho. In vain did Kildare interpose, remonstrate, summon them to appear before him, and to submit their contests to a judicial decision: their encounters were bloody, and their ravages extensive and severe. De la Poer, the aggressor, was soon
defeated

^r Rym. t. iv. p. 255. ^p Ib. p. 298. ^r Ann. Clyn. MS.

defeated and driven from the kingdom, and his lands and dependents, as well as those of his associates, exposed to all the rage of vindictive conquerors^e. The king, who was informed of their violences, commanded them, on pain of forfeiture, to lay down their arms. The English inhabitants, alarmed at their destructive progress, fortified their towns against them, and prepared to repel their inroads. Shocked at the havock which they themselves had made, and dreading the consequences of the royal displeasure, and the resentment of their countrymen^r, they at length put an end to those hostilities, which, besides the immediate devastation, had also encouraged the Irish to rise up in arms, against a divided people and an insulted government. The old septs of Leinster, under the conduct of one of the family of Mac-Murchad extended their ravages even to the neighbourhood of Dublin : but by the provisions of the chief governour were repelled, their chieftain taken prisoner, and the man who affected his escape condemned and executed ; when the death of Kildare transferred the government to Roger Outlaw, prior of Kilmainham, who had been the Irish lord chancellor.

THE administration of this ecclesiastic was honourably distinguished by a reconciliation effected between the great contending lords, de Burgho, de la Poer, the Geraldines, and Berminghams, which gave considerable strength to the English interest, and served to intimidate the Irish enemy of Leinster. This unhappy people, wasted by their own follies and the oppression of their neighbours, smarting with the bad success of their late precipitate insurrections, and recalled to pacific measures

measures by the union of the English lords, embraced the present season of general tranquillity to address themselves once more to the throne of England, and petitioned that all those odious distinctions which had so long deluged the land with blood^r, should at length be abolished, that the Irish inhabitants should be admitted to the state and privileges of English subjects, without obliging individuals to sue for special charters. The petition, as usual, was remitted to the chief governor Darcey, who had succeeded to the prior. He was directed to refer it to the Irish parliament; and, as usual, it was either clandestinely defeated, or openly rejected.

THE resentment of the Irish, naturally violent, and now too justly provoked, broke out in an insurrection projected with greater concert, and executed with more violence, than for some time had been experienced. O'Brien, the chieftain of Thomond, was chosen leader of the insurgents; and under his standard some powerful septs of Leinster determined to execute their vengeance^a. The flame of war soon raged in Meath, in Munster, in the fairest English settlements of Leinster: and the first successes of the Irish, which were not inconsiderable, inflamed their pride even to the most outrageous violence. In their triumphant progress^c, we are told that they surrounded a church where about fourscore persons of English race were assembled at their devotions: these wretches, too sensible of the cruelty of the enemy, and utterly hopeless of escaping their fury, petitioned only that the priest might be suffered to depart unmolested. But the merciless ruffians, instead

stead of complying with this affecting supplication, were only provoked to make the priest the very first object of their cruelty. The Host which he held forth, in hopes that the awful object might have some influence upon their minds, was torn from him, and spurned under foot; their weapons were plunged in him, and the church, with all the miserable people cooped up in it, destroyed by fire.

THE horror conceived at such terrible executions, drove those who were most exposed to the fury of these barbarians to an obstinate and desperate defence. The citizens of Wexford had the good fortune to repel them with considerable slaughter. James Butler, lately created earl of Ormond^A, was not inactive in defending his own territory, and distressing and pursuing the insurgents. The lord justice himself was obliged to take the field, and successfully encountered the most dangerous of the Leinster enemies. But as the insurrection was too extensive, and the enemy too numerous for the forces of government and the well-affected lords to suppress, Darcy was soon obliged to invite Maurice of Desmond to his assistance. He treated with him as an Irish chieftain, solicited him as an ally rather than a subject, and left him to conduct his own men, and to maintain them by his own methods of arbitrary exaction. An army, said to consist of ten thousand^N, was thus raised against the Irish enemy; but the inconsiderable advantages which these forces gained, by no means compensated the severe distresses which they inflicted on the best and most peaceable of the English districts. Maurice exacted his *coyne* and *livery*

^A Pat. 3 Ed. III.

^N Cox.

livery with a detestable violence and oppression, not only unrestrained, but with a tacit assent and connivance of a government utterly unprovided to pay or support his troops by any other expedient.

So necessary was Maurice Fitz-Thomas now become to the support of government, and of consequence so much an object of the royal favour, that he was honoured with the title of EARL of DESMOND, and with this dignity received a confirmation of his royal liberties in the county of Kerry^c; a dangerous instrument of mischief, by which his power had been already aggrandized, and the royal authority considerably weakened, by the exclusion of its ministers from a district so extensive. To encrease the evil, in this very year^a, the earl of Ormond procured a like grant of royal liberties, and converted his demesnes of Tipperary into a county palatinate. Thus was the number of palatinates encreased to nine; Carlow, Wexford, Kilkenny, Kildare, and Leix, the portions of the five coheiresses of the family of earl Marishal, those of Meath and Ulster, and those of the earls of Desmond and Ormond. “Those absolute palatines
 “made barons and knights; exercised high justice
 “in all points, within their territories; erected
 “courts for criminal and civil causes, and for their
 “own revenues, in the same form in which the
 “king’s courts were established at Dublin; made
 “their own judges, seneschals, sheriffs, coroners,
 “and escheators; so that the king’s writs did not
 “run in those counties, which took up more than
 “two parts of the English colonies, but only in
 “the church lands lying within the same, which
 “were called THE CROSSE, wherein the king
 “made

“made a sheriff.” From this detail of Sir John Davis, it is not difficult to account for the dangerous independence which the great lords affected, for their enormous influence, and the proportionable weakness of government. The land was in effect parcelled out to a number of rival potentates, each zealous to aggrandize his own power, to mark his own superiority over his great neighbours, cold to the interests of the crown, and frequently not displeased at the weakness and distresses of a chief governour.

IN the mean time, O'Brien, leader of the Irish insurgents, not yet subdued, found full employment both for the English councils convened to devise the means of reducing him, and for the troops sent out to oppose him. Deliberations were held, and armaments prepared; but the leaders were divided, and their troops employed with little honour or advantage. Sir Anthony Lucy^r, an English knight appointed to the government, was astonished and provoked at the insolence of the Irish, and justly suspected that they must be secretly favoured and abetted by some great lords. He entered on his administration with a determined purpose to support the interests of his royal master, by a vigorous prosecution of the enemy, and a spirited opposition to the insolence and insidious practices of his insincere adherents of the English raceⁿ. He summoned a parliament to meet at Dublin: his order was neglected, and the assembly inconsiderable. It was adjourned to Kilkenny; and here the still decreasing number of attending members gave new occasion of suspicion. Intelligence was received of some considerable havock committed by the

the Irish. The governour imagining with good reason, and confirmed in his suspicion by sufficient evidence, that the enemy was secretly encouraged by some lords of English race, determined to strike at the very root of such abuse. He seized the earl of Desmond, Mandeville, Walter de Burgho and his brother, William and Walter Bermingham. The evidence against William Bermingham was full and forcible: he was condemned and executed: his brother escaped only by his privilege as an ecclesiastic: Desmond, who had been obliged to submit to this rigorous governour, after a long confinement was discharged, on great surety, and sent into England.

THE power even of the most active chief governour could not have proved equal to this impartial and spirited execution of justice, and this vigorous opposition to the great lords, had not king Edward at this time discovered a more than ordinary attention to his Irish interests, and declared his design of visiting the realm. Some salutary ordinances were transmitted, for the more regular and effectual execution of the English laws, in those particulars in which they had been contravened, neglected, or corrupted by his officers and other subjects in Ireland. These were soon followed, in the first place, by a resumption of all Irish grants made in his reign during the power of Mortimer and his mother; and soon after, by a mandate to the earls of Ulster and Ormond, Sir William and Sir Walter de Burgho, to repair to his court, in order to concert the measures necessary for his voyage, and to attend him into Ireland. All those barons of the realm of England who enjoyed lands in Ireland were also summoned

summoned for the same purpose^a. And though the term fixed for this expedition was prolonged^b, yet an order for arresting all ships in the ports of Ireland, and sending them to Holyhead for the convenience of his passage, and another for impressing a number of Welsh infantry to attend him, seemed to indicate a settled purpose of complying with the desires of his parliament, and engaging in the reduction of Ireland; a country where the English power had as yet obtained but a partial, a precarious, and a disputed settlement. To confirm such expectations, all those officers who had been commissioned to attend the king's services in Ireland, were now strictly enjoined to repair thither without any excuse; and a formal order issued for searching the king's records^a, to see what measures had been taken for the amendment of the Irish.

BUT all this was nothing more than a specious pretence for demanding supplies from his parliament, and a veil for covering those designs, which, though less honourable or justifiable, suited better with the ambitious spirit of young Edward. The Irish had never been subdued; nor was their country in a worse state than at the accession either of the king or his father. But Edward the second had patiently submitted to see the glorious acquisition of Scotland wrested from him; and this loss seemed to be confirmed to his son by the ignominious peace concluded by Mortimer. No sooner had this gallant prince been emancipated from the influence of his mother and her favourite, than he resolved to imitate the vigour of his illustrious grandfather, and in the first place, to recover the dominion of Scotland. In despite of treaties and connexions he

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first spirited up Edward Baliol to assert the antiquated claims of his family; indirectly supported and assisted him; seized the favourable moment to take advantage of his success; and now, when his parliament had granted a subsidy for the pacification of Ireland, and his troops provided for this service were ready to embark, the king at once cast off the mask, which probably had not concealed his real intentions from the most discerning, and ordered these forces to march to the frontiers of Scotland. It was dangerous, he observed, to leave the northern counties defenceless while their neighbours were in arms; and as his presence was necessary in this quarter, the Irish expedition must of course be for some time suspended. His parliament acquiesced, and indulgently permitted the enterprising genius of their monarch to take its free course: the battle of Hallidown confirmed their favourable expectations of his conduct.

THE only measure now taken for the regulation of Ireland^d was that precarious and inglorious one of treating with the adversaries of government. The prior of Kilmainham was commissioned to enter into such conventions with all insurgents both of the English and Irish race, as he should judge most expedient for the pacification of the realm, and the honour and interest of his master. The great lords received orders to assist him by their advice and countenance; and the sheriffs of the several counties and liberties were instructed, that the conferences to be held for this purpose should be protected, without damage or injury to any of the parties. Thus were the turbulent and disaffected taught their own real power, and the weakness

weakness and insufficiency of that government which attempted to controul them. Insidious accommodations were readily concluded; and a number of secret enemies admitted to the royal grace and favour, whose perverse dispositions were thus cherished, instead of being broken by a steady, firm, and rigorous authority.

THIS injudicious condescension to the enemies of the English interest^d, was attended by an event of the utmost danger and most pernicious consequences, that of the death of William earl of Ulster, who was assassinated by his own perfidious servants at Carrickfergus. His countessⁿ, with her infant daughter, fled in the utmost consternation into England, and the vast demesnes of this illustrious family were left without any sufficient defender. By the law of England, the earl's lands should have been seized into the king's hands as guardian to the infant ward: but this law was of little force against the violence of old claimants. The northern sept^s of O'Nial, in whom all national animosities were revived by this event, seized the occasion of recovering their antient power, rose suddenly in arms, passed the river Bann, and fell furiously upon the English settlers established by the family of de Burgho. Notwithstanding a brave and obstinate resistance, the persevering virulence of the Irish prevailed in a course of time, so as to extirpate the English, at least to confine them within very narrow bounds^r. And their extensive possessions now parcelled out among the conquerours, received the name of the Upper and Lower Clan-Hugh-boy; from their leader Hugh-boy O'Nial. In Connaught some younger branches of the family of de Burgho, intruded

^d Excerpt. ex Ann. Clyn. MS. N A. D. 1333. Finglas's Breviate.
^r Davis Diss.

intruded into the late earl's possessions; of whom, two the most powerful contrived to divide the great feigniory between them; and conscious that the law of England must oppose this usurpation, and defend the rightful claim of the young heiress, they at once rejected the English law, renounced their names, language, apparel, and manners, adopted those of the Irish, called themselves MAC-WILLIAM OUGHTER, and MAC-WILLIAM EIGHTER, that is, the *Further*, and the *Nether Mac-William*, seduced their countrymen settled in this province, by their pernicious example, and from thenceforward transmitted their possessions in the course of tainistry and gavel-kind.

THE chastisement inflicted by the chief governor on the murderers of the earl of Ulster was but a slight consolation for the misfortunes that were foreseen, and proved to be the consequences of this event. In proportion as the English were broken by invasion, or divided by faction, the old natives became more turbulent. Accommodations slightly made were easily and carelessly violated; and while the open enemy was in arms, the king's vicegerent had a number of private and insidious adversaries of the English race to controul and guard against. It was found necessary to seize and confine two of the noble house of de la Poer^a. Nicholas Fitz-Maurice of Kerry, who avowed his attachment to the Irish of Munster, was made prisoner by his kinsman Desmond, and confined for life; while Kildare, with equal vigilance and spirit, chastised the violence of those who had presumed to disturb the peace of Leinster.

BUT

BUT the rigorous measures now pursued by king Edward served to damp the zeal of these nobles, to enflame discontents, and extend division yet further among all the lords of English race. The evils of a distracted state, local feuds and insurrections, violence and ravage, Englishmen renouncing their allegiance and revolting to the enemy, the enemy strengthened, emboldened, and enabled to return with double fury, and re-assume those settlements from whence they had formerly been driven, were soon experienced in an alarming deficiency of revenue, highly inconvenient to a prince who now meditated his vast designs against France. Edward was necessitated to seek every resource for supplying his exhausted finances. He depended for some assistance from Ireland: he was disappointed: and possessed as he was with the glittering objects of his ambition, the disappointment was received with a passionate impatience. Not considering that his enormous schemes of conquest had been the very means of diverting his attention from his Irish interests, and consequently the occasion of the distresses of Ireland, and the disappointments he there experienced, he accused his servants and ministers, and denounced the terror of his resentment against all those whom he had employed in this kingdom. Conscious of his own power, and disdaining to attend to the passions, tempers, and prejudices of his subjects, in a country where his mandate he conceived was more than sufficient to secure an immediate and implicit obedience, he at once resolved on the most violent and offensive measures.

HE

HE began with declaring^r, that all suspensions or remissions of debts due to the crown, either in his time or that of his predecessors (except those which had the sanction of the great seal) should be null and void ; and the debts strictly levied without delay ; in consideration, as he expressed it, of his necessities arising from the war he was to maintain upon the continent, and other urgent affairs^v. Hence he proceeded to a more extensive and vigorous resumption of all grants made not by him only, but by his father. Those to the prior of Kilmainham, who had administered his government with vigour and fidelity, were specifically mentioned^e. The justices of the king's bench and common pleas, Mountpeffon and Baggot, were suddenly discharged from their offices. He not only dismissed Ashburne, another of his officers, but seized his estate. The deputy was forbidden to grant or alien any of the king's lands without a strict inquisition into their circumstances and value. The treasurer of the exchequer, who claimed a privilege to dispose of small sums without voucher, was not only prohibited for the future, but obliged to account for such sums from the beginning of the present reign : he was forbidden to take rewards for indulging the king's debtors ; he was abridged of the power of naming sheriffs, a power hitherto annexed to his office : his receipts of the king's rents were ordered to be open and public : and to complete the scheme of reformation, the deputy was directed to certify to the king in his chancery of England, the qualities, services, fees, number, and behaviour of all his officers in Ireland. But the most offensive and severe of these ordinances was not to be compared with one which

^r Pryn. Anim. p. 273, 274. ^v Davis. ^e Pryn. ut sup.

which crowned the whole intemperate conduct of the king, and afforded just ground of dissatisfaction to a people conscious of their own, and the merits of their ancestors, and too powerful, and too far removed from the seat of royalty to conceal their indignation. It is here inserted at large, that its spirit and purport may be more clearly apprehended.

“ The king, to his trusty and beloved John Darcy,
“ justiciary of Ireland, greeting: ”

“ **W**HEREAS it appeareth to us and our
“ council, for many reasons, that our
“ service shall the better and more profitably be
“ conducted in the said land, by English officers
“ having revenues and possessions in England; than
“ by Irish or Englishmen married and estated in
“ Ireland, and without any possessions in our realm
“ of England; we enjoin you, that you diligently
“ inform yourself of all our officers greater or
“ lesser within our land of Ireland aforesaid; and
“ that all such officers beneficed, married and
“ estated in the said land, and having nothing in
“ England, be removed from their offices; that
“ you place and substitute in their room other fit
“ Englishmen, having lands, tenements and bene-
“ fices in England, and that you cause the said
“ offices for the future, to be executed by such
“ Englishmen, and none other, any order of ours
“ to you made in contrarywise notwithstanding.”

Thus were the descendents of those who had originally gained the English acquisitions in Ireland, who had laboured in a long course of painful

and perilous service to maintain them, who daily shed their blood in the service of their monarch, pronounced indiscriminately to be dangerous, and declared incapable of filling any, even the meanest department in administration. The degeneracy and disaffection of a number of subjects of the English race, considered in the most striking and offensive view, could only have warranted some secret resolutions of entrusting the affairs of government chiefly to others: but a formal, open, and general sentence of disqualification, was equally iniquitous and impolitic. A just prince could have been induced to it only by the severest misrepresentations; nor can it be reconciled to the plainest dictates of prudence, unless we suppose that Edward had been made to regard the country and the people he thus treated, with the most sovereign contempt.

BUT whatever representations he had received, or conceptions he had formed of the old English inhabitants, they were too spirited to endure the loss of their lands, and their own personal indignities with an abject resignation. The late emigrants from England triumphed over the old race, as if they had all forfeited their privileges, and were consolidated with those Irish who had been reduced by their arms. The old English, on the other hand, beheld the partiality shewn to those who boasted their English birth, with impatience and indignation. Jealousy and dissention were thus excited among those who still adhered to English government, and proved the mistaken policy of the king's procedure. The consequences were more alarming as the injured party of his Irish subjects were the more powerful, of more extensive

extensive influence, and better enabled to support the interests of government, or rather absolutely necessary to the very existence of the royal authority in Ireland. Essentially injured and wantonly insulted, they were soon agitated to that degree of ferment which threatens something violent and dangerous. The more powerful among them fomented the discontents of their inferiours; and where the interests of all were threatened, a common cause and general danger readily disposed them to a truly formidable combination". Their violences were so dreaded, that the chief governour deemed it necessary to summon a parliament at Dublin on this critical occasion.

THIS chief governour, Sir John Morris, was of no higher note or station than that of an English knight, and not distinguished either by his fortune or abilities. And the lords he was to govern, regarded it not as the least of those insults they had sustained, that the king's authority should be delegated to so inferiour a person. The spirited Geraldines were particularly irritated, and espoused the cause of their brethren the old English with extraordinary zeal. Their numerous adherents gave them consequence and power, and their consequence and power served to give countenance to these adherents, and encouraged them to an open and violent avowal of their dissatisfactions. Desmond, too proud and powerful to be attached to government by any other means but favour and flattery, flew through all his numerous partizans of the South, conferred with the nobility who were most attached to him, and practised with those cities and corporations in which he had the greatest influence

influence. Kildare, his kinsman and associate, was equally provoked and equally active and industrious. So that at the time when the parliament was to meet at Dublin, Morris was alarmed at the intelligence of another independent assembly more numerous and respectable, convened by Desmond at Kilkenny. They stiled themselves the prelates, nobles, and commons of the land, were the more formidable as they affected to assemble peaceably, and prepared a remonstrance to be transmitted to the king.

THE only account which the English annalists have given of their transactions, is, * that by a few short strictures they intimated the notorious insufficiency of the present chief governour^r, as well as his rapaciousness and oppressions; imputing the distresses of the realm, and the deficiencies of the public revenue, to the pernicious conduct and counsels of the king's ministers^r. But we have a petition of the grievances of Ireland, together with the king's answers, among the close rolls of the sixteenth year of this reign, which seems pretty evidently to have been the act of this convention at Kilkenny; which assembled for the first time in this year, and was too formidable to be despised, or to have their representations passed over in contemptuous silence. It is said to be the act of the prelates, earls, barons, and commons of the land, without

* By their messengers, say these annalists, they proposed the following questions to the king.

How a realm of war could be governed by a man unskilful in all warlike service?

How an officer under the king, who entered very poor, could in one year amass more wealth than men of large estates in many years?

How it chanced, since they were all called lords of their own, that the sovereign lord of them all was not the richer for them?

x *Campion. Cox.*

r *Pryn. Anim. p. 279.*

without the usual addition of their being assembled in a parliament held at some particular time and place ; and it contains such bold accusations of the king's ministers, and such insinuations against the chief governour himself, as seem not likely to have proceeded from an assembly convened by his authority, and possibly consisting for the most part, of that faction which opposed the old English settlers ; favoured, and therefore influenced by the governour. But wherever it was framed ; the petition must not pass entirely unnoticed, as it exhibits a distinct and striking view of the irregularities in administration, and the grievances which had for some time enflamed the public dissensions, and weakened the interests of the crown.

THE petitioners begin with representing the total neglect of fortifications and castles, particularly those of the late earl of Ulster, in Ulster and Connaught, now in the king's custody, but abandoned by his officers, so that more than a third part of the lands conquered by his royal progenitors were regained by the Irish enemy : and by their insolence on the one hand, and the excesses of his servants on the other, his faithful subjects are reduced to the utmost distress. Other castles, they observe, had been lost by the corruption of treasurers who with-held their just pay from the governours and warders ; sometimes obliged them in their necessities to accept some small part of their arrears, and to give acquittances for the whole ; sometimes substituted in their place mean and insufficient persons, contented with any wages they were pleased to allow ; sometimes appointed governours to castles never erected, charging their full pay, and disbursing but a trifling part : that

the subject was oppressed by the exaction of victuals never paid for, and charged at their full value to the crown, as if duly purchased : that hostings were frequently summoned by the chief governor without concurrence of the nobles, and money accepted in lieu of personal service : treaties made with the Irish, which left them in possession of those lands they had unjustly seized ; the attempts of the subjects to regain them, punished with fine and imprisonment ; partial truces made with the enemy, which, while one country was secured, left them at liberty to infest the neighbouring districts ; the absence and foreign residence of those who should defend their own lands and seignories, and contribute to the public aid and service ; illegal seizures, of the persons and properties of the English subjects.—All these, with various instances of corruption, oppression, and extortion, in the king's servants, were urged plainly and forcibly, as the just grounds of discontent.

BUT chiefly, and with particular warmth and earnestness, they represent to the king, that his English subjects of Ireland had been traduced and misrepresented to the throne, by those who had been sent from England to govern them ; men, who came into the kingdom without knowledge of its state, circumstances, or interests ; whose sole object was to repair their shattered fortunes : too poor to support their state, much less to indulge their passions, until they had filled their coffers by extortion, to the great detriment and affliction of the people : that, notwithstanding such misrepresentations, the English subjects of Ireland had ever adhered in loyalty and allegiance to the crown of England, had maintained the land for the king

and his progenitors, served frequently both against the Irish and their foreign enemies, and mostly at their own charges.

“As a reward of these services,” say the petitioners, “your progenitors, Sir, and you, have granted by letters patent to diverse people of the realm, lands, tenements, franchises, wards, marriages, and pardons of debts, which, by virtue of such letters patent they have held in peaceable possession; till lately that your ministers by orders received from England, as they pretend, have resumed and taken into your hands what your progenitors, Sir, and you have so granted, as well what was granted for good and reasonable cause as otherwise; and this contrary to the tenour and intent of the afore said orders, to endamage others for their own private emolument. Which things, Sir, seem to your liege subjects contrary to reason, as their ancestors and they have well deserved, and do deserve, by defending and maintaining, as much as in them lies, the dominion of the land to our use. For which, Sir, may it please you to ordain that they be not ousted of their freeholds without being called into judgment, according to the provision of the GREAT CHARTER.”

To the several grievances alledged, the answers of the king were now gracious and condescending; and particularly to this last article, he replied, that the grants of his progenitors should be restored without diminution; that those made in his own reign should also be delivered up on sufficient surety that they should be again surrendered, if on a legal inquisition they were found resumeable, as granted

without

without just cause; and that the pardons of debts should be deemed valid, until the causes of such pardons should be duly tried.

SUCH condescensions were at this time the more necessary, as Edward prepared for his expedition into France, and now sent his letters to the officers of state in Ireland, intimating that he had already applied for succours to the principal lords of this kingdom, directing them to treat with these lords, and to use their utmost diligence to prevail upon them to lead or send their respective vassals into Bretany with all possible expedition.



C H A P. V.

Administration of Ufford.—His rigorous treatment of the great factious lords.—Desmond and Kildare reduced and imprisoned.—Earl of Desmond escapes and flies.—Returns on the death of Ufford.—Is restored to favour.—Attends the king's service in France.—Earl of Kildare distinguished at the siege of Calais.—Irish parliament grants a subsidy.—Arrogance and sedition of an archbishop of Cashel.—Integrity of Rokeby the lord deputy.—He is succeeded by the earl of Desmond.—Restored by the death of the earl.—Ordinances for the regulation of the state of Ireland.—Provision against odious distinctions between the subjects of this land—against the growing degeneracy of the English.—Subjects divided.—O'Brien and O'Connor in arms.—The countryarrassed.—Lord Lionel created chief governour of Ireland.—Preparations for his departure.—His forces.—His Attendants.—His arrival in Ireland.—Prejudices of Lord Lionel.—He forbids the old English to approach his camp.—Consequences of this order.—The princearrassed by the Irish enemy.—Is in danger.—Corrects his errour, and summons the old English to attend him.—Gains some advantages.—A subsidy granted for his support.—Discipline of his troops.—Duke of Clarence recalled.—Factions enflamed by his conduct.—He returns to his government.—Convenes a parliament at Kilkenny.—Object and purpose of this assembly.—Statute of Kilkenny.—Influence of this ordinance.—Administration of the earl of Desmond.—He is succeeded by Sir William Windfore.—Measures taken against the Irish enemy.—Their dangerous

dangerous progress.—Instance of the abhorrence conceived of Ireland.—Misdemeanour alledged against Windfore.—He returns to the government.—Is unsuccessful.—Pensions paid to the Irish.—Representatives from the land of Ireland summoned to Westminster.—Answers to the king's writs.—Gradual declension of the English interest.

WHETHER the royal intentions for the redress of grievances were defeated by the administration of the Irish government^a, or whether the pride of the old nobility of English race was not yet satisfied by his condescensions, faction still continued; and those born in Ireland still retained their jealousies and discontents against the more favoured part of their fellow-subjects, who had lately been transmitted from England; while the Irish septs of Leinster, taking advantage of dissention, rose, as usual, in arms, and harrassed the province. Edward, by confining his attention to the vast schemes which he had formed against France, had encouraged, and now contributed to encrease these disorders which required an active, spirited and vigorous chief governour to suppress.

SIR Ralph de Ufford, a man of this very character, was entrusted with the administration, and passed into Ireland, possessed with the utmost indignation both against the Irish insurgents and the discontented English; which prompted him to execute his powers, not with zeal only, but with rigour. He instantly commanded the marchers, whose duty it was to guard the English settlements from invasion, to repair each to their respective stations, which they had been habituated to neglect;

lect; he proclaimed it in the highest degree penal to convey provisions, horses, or arms to the enemy, and strictly enjoined, agreeably to those ordinances which had frequently been repeated, and therefore, we may conclude, were frequently violated, that the king's lands should have *but one war and one peace*; that wherever the attack was made, it should be considered as an injury to all, and that all should instantly unite in one common cause, and to repel one common danger.

NOR was the attention of Ufford confined to the suppression of Irish enemies. Desmond, the head of the discontented English, was summoned to attend a parliament in Dublin, as a test of his attachment to the king's government, which he oftentimes affected to despise, and to which he paid at most but a precarious and occasional obedience^d. The earl proudly slighted the mandate, and summoned an assembly of his own at Calan, independent of this English knight sent to govern men of such superiour dignity. Ufford, firm to his purpose, issued a royal proclamation, whereby the nobles and commons were forbidden at their peril to attend this unlawful assembly; and to enforce this order, collected his troops, marched into Munster as against a declared enemy, possessed himself of the earl's lands, seized and executed some of his principal dependents who had most notoriously offended by their arbitrary exactions, and so surprized and terrified this refractory lord by the vigour of his operations, that he thought it necessary to submit, offered to abide a just and honourable trial for any disloyalty objected to him, and found several sureties of distinguished rank and

and character to answer for his appearance. The earl of Kildare, equally obnoxious to the governor, was in the next place attacked as a disaffected and rebellious lord; and with some difficulty reduced, taken, and imprisoned; to the utter terror and confusion of those great lords of the English race, who had so long despised the weakness of government, and particularly of the earl of Desmond^c, who was so shocked at the intrepid severity of Ufford, and so conscious of his own irregular conduct, that he retired in dismay, and left his sureties to answer for this ungenerous default.

THE spirit of this chief governor might have proved of considerable use in quelling the disobedient both of the Irish and English race: but his sudden death deprived his master of a meritorious servant, who had supported his interests and conducted his government with vigour and success, in despite of opposition and popular odium. Sir John Morris his successor, acted with greater lenity and condescension. He released Kildare from prison; and when a violent insurrection in Ulster determined the king to substitute Roger Darcy first^a, and afterwards Walter de Bermingham in his room, Desmond was again emboldened to appear and remonstrate against the wrongs he alledged to have received from Ufford^r. Bermingham warmly espoused his cause, and sent him into England to seek redress from the throne. No season could have been more favourable to his application. Edward had formed his armament, and was now on the point of embarking on his glorious expedition into France^v. He had two years before

before summoned this earl, with others of the great English lords of Ireland, to attend him with their powers. Desmond was appointed to lead twenty men at arms, and fifty hoblers : Kildare, the same numbers; others were to furnish such a number of each as suited the extent of their several possessions, so as to complete the number of one hundred and ninety men at arms, and five hundred hoblers. Whether this little band now attended, or that the king procured a greater force from Ireland, doth not appear from record; but he was at least solicitous to engage Desmond in his service, a nobleman of such extensive following, such powerful connections, and so great popularity in Ireland. His complaints were received with the most gracious attention; he was assured of a speedy restoration of his lands; he was in the mean time taken into the king's pay; he attended him with a considerable train into France; and by the gracious manner of his reception, the earl of Kildare was afterwards induced to take the same part. In the winter after the victory of Crecy, we find a small number of the English nobility of Ireland again summoned to attend the king's standard; and Kildare, particularly, was so distinguished by his valour at the siege of Calais^u, that he received the honour of knighthood from the king's hand; and returned to his country with that consequence naturally derived from the royal favour; and the brilliancy of the service in which he had engaged.

IN the mean time, the defence of the English territory against the perpetual incursions of the Irish was not neglected by the chief governors

Morris

Morris and Berminghamⁿ. We find them frequently commissioning the principal English settlers of the different districts, to raise forces, to make war upon the enemy, or to confer and treat with them, as the public service might require. In order to remedy the abuse of *coyne* and *livery*, and to relieve the subject from the heavy oppression of such demands^x, it had been resolved, in a parliament held by Bermingham at Kilkenny, to grant a subsidy for maintenance of the Irish war, of two shillings from every carucate of land, and two shillings in the pound from every subject whose personal fortune amounted to six pounds. An incident which arose from this grant marks the nature and effect of those national and party prejudices, which the situation of this country neglected as it was, and managed without sound policy or integrity, naturally produced.

RALPH KELLY, an Irishman, just now promoted to the see of Cashel^r, who tho' he had sworn allegiance, and received his temporalities from the king, yet was possessed with all the vulgar prejudices of his countrymen, and deemed it meritorious to embarrass the administration of government, determined to give a vigorous opposition to the levying this subsidy through his province. The grant, it seems, extended to ecclesiastical persons^y, and the tenants of ecclesiastical lands. He summoned his suffragans of Limerick, Emly, and Lismore; and, with their concurrence, issued an ordinance that all beneficed clergymen who should presume to pay their allotted portion of this subsidy, were to be immediately deprived

ⁿ Rut. Tur. Berm. ^x Ploc. Cor. 21 E. III. MS. Trin. Col. Dub.
^r Ware de Præf. Hib. ^y Ploc. Cor. ut sup.

deprived of their benefices, and declared incapable of holding any ecclesiastical benefice within the province; and that all lay-tenants on the ecclesiastical lands, who should comply with the requisition of parliament, were to be excommunicated, and their children disqualified from enjoying any ecclesiastical preferment, even to the third generation. Nor did this bold edict satisfy the flaming zeal and violence of the archbishop. He repaired to the town of Clonmel, in all the state of his office, in the habit, and with the attendance suited to the most solemn exercise of his function, so as to strike the minds of the superstitious multitude with greater reverence. He publicly and solemnly denounced the sentence of excommunication on all those who paid, imposed, procured, or in any manner contributed to the exacting of this subsidy from any of the persons or lands belonging to his church, and on William Epworth, by name, the king's commissioner in the county of Tipperary, for receiving it from the several collectors. An information was exhibited against the prelate for this offence. He denied the charge: he pleaded, that, by the great charter granted by the crown to England and Ireland, it was provided that the church both of England and Ireland should be free; that, by the same charter, it was ordained that those who infringed the immunities of the church should be *ipso facto* excommunicated; that he had but exercised his spiritual power, in consequence of this ordinance, against those who violated the king's peace, or levied money on the subject without his knowledge and assent; and that Epworth in particular had been excommunicated for refusing canonical obedience to his ordinary. Both the archbishop and his suffragans, however, were found guilty;

but tho' they repeatedly refused to appear in arrest of judgement, they seem to have been too powerful, and their cause too popular for the offence to receive its due punishment.

By the attention of the king to prohibit the great lords of Ireland from departing at their pleasure from the kingdom^u, to the utter desertion of their duties and offices, by the removal of ministers either insufficient or corrupt, but, above all, by the favour shewn to the earls of Desmond and Kildare, the peace of the English territories was for some time preserved, without any extensive or dangerous irruption; and the king's deputies left to summon parliaments, and devise means for correcting the abuses and degeneracy of the English inhabitants. Sir Thomas Rokeby^x, an English knight, who assumed the reins of government with an equity and integrity unknown to many of his predecessors, applied himself to this necessary work with peculiar zeal; and, by his own disinterested moderation, set a noble example to those lords who had been habituated to pillage and oppress their inferiours. "I am served," said the honest Englishman, "without parade or splendour; but let my dishes be wooden, rather than my creditors unpaid." But stranger as he was to the circumstances of the country, and the passions and interests of those he was to govern, integrity and disinterested zeal could not give the due weight and consequence to his administration^y. The insurrections of the Irish again grown so considerable as to occasion a general proclamation of *the royal service*, whereby all the English subjects in every quarter of the realm were called to take arms against

against the common enemy, determined the king to entrust his Irish government to the earl of Desmond, now completely reinstated in his favour; and who, by his connexions and dependencies, as well as by his warlike disposition, seemed better calculated for governing in the present disordered state of his affairs.

His death, which happened soon after his promotionⁿ, restored Rokeby to the administration; whose power was confined to the procuring useful ordinances of parliament, pointed chiefly against the degeneracy of the old English. The equity of the crown shewed that attention to the ease and security of the Irish subjects, which their own great lords denied them. In all erroneous proceedings of their courts, they had hitherto been obliged to seek redress in England; but their own parliaments were now to take cognizance of all such matters^r, and to decide the rights of the subjects, without exposing them to unnecessary trouble and expence. Some other regulations for the better instruction of the people, and preventing the inconvenience arising from the non-residence of their pastors, particularly in the diocese of Dublin, were followed by a solemn ordinance for the regulation both of church and state, and the more effectual execution of the English laws^r. They begin, as usual, with a declaration that the liberties and immunities of the church shall be preserved inviolate, and proceed to point out the legal and regular method for adjusting the general interests and concerns of the state. "We will and command," saith the kingⁿ, "that our affairs, and those of
Vol. I. B b "our

ⁿ A. D. 1356.

^r Pryn. Anim. p. 295.

^r Pryn. Anim. p. 286.

ⁿ Ib. p. 287.

“ our LAND, especially the great and arduous,
 “ shall be referred to our councils, composed of
 “ skilful counsellors, prelates, nobles, and other
 “ discreet and honest men, in those parts contigu-
 “ ous to the places where such councils shall be
 “ held, and to be summoned for this purpose ;
 “ but in PARLIAMENT, shall be, by our coun-
 “ sellors, prelates, nobles, and others of the land
 “ afore said, agreeably to justice, law, custom, and
 “ reason, faithfully treated, debated, discussed,
 “ and finally determined, without fear, favour,
 “ hatred, bribe, or any sinister influence.” “ By
 “ this ordinance,” saith lord Coke, “ the parlia-
 “ ments of Ireland are regulated according to the
 “ institution of England ; for before this time,
 “ the conventions in Ireland were not so properly
 “ parliaments, as assemblies of great men.”

AMONG several provisions for the execution of justice, the administration of government, and the protection of the rights and liberties of the subject, agreeably to the GREAT CHARTER, we find the following article worthy of distinct notice, as it shews the present temper of the English subjects of Ireland, and the real importance of those dissensions which had been raised and fomented among them.

“ ITEM, although the English born in Ireland,
 “ as well as those born in England, be true English-
 “ men, living under our dominion and sovereignty,
 “ and bound by the same laws, rights and cus-
 “ toms, yet various dissensions and maintenances
 “ have arisen among those of both races, on ac-
 “ count of national distinction, from whence
 “ some

“ some evils have arisen, and still greater are to
 “ be apprehended, unless a remedy be speedily
 “ applied.—Our pleasure is, and we strictly enjoin,
 “ that our lord justice calling to him our chan-
 “ cellor and treasurer of Ireland, and such nobles
 “ as he shall judge proper to be called from the
 “ neighbouring districts, where such dissensions
 “ have arisen, shall frequently, and as often as need
 “ may be, diligently enquire into such dissensions,
 “ maintenances, and factions, and the names of
 “ those by whom they are supported, and causing
 “ due process to be made against the delinquents,
 “ shall, when convicted, punish them by impri-
 “ sonment, fine, or other just method, as such
 “ dissensions manifestly tend to lead our liege peo-
 “ ple into sedition and treason.”

But while the royal authority applied remedies to one disorder, others were ever ready to break out, and elude the insufficient endeavours of government. The old English, indeed, hated their newly arrived brethren; but their pride still prevented them from uniting with their brethren of the same race. They were ever ready to invade and harass each other, so as to oblige the king by frequent mandates to forbid their petty excursions, and to compose their brawls. The alliances which they formed with Irish families, and the partialities arising from such connexions, introduced a number of secret enemies into the English settlements, ready to betray the people they consorted with, industrious to seduce the subject, and by secret insinuation, or the natural influence of constant and familiar intercourse to detach him from his countrymen, and to form his manners and

affections by the Irish model. To guard against the treacherous subtlety of the Irish, and to cut off that dangerous correspondence which the growing degeneracy of the English had encouraged, it was enjoined by royal mandate, that no mere Irishman should be admitted into any office or trust in any city, borough, or castle, in the king's land: that no bishop or prior, under the king's dominion and allegiance, should admit any of this race to an ecclesiastical benefice, or into any religious house, on account of consanguinity, or other pretence whatever. Malice and self-interest were careful to take advantage of this order, and to extend it beyond the original intention. The denized Irish were excluded from ecclesiastical preferments, by virtue of the clause which directed that these should be conferred on English clerks. They had the spirit to apply to parliament for relief, and the success to obtain an explanation in favour of their rights.

SUBJECTS divided and discontented, engaged by their petty factions and competitions, could not even repel the assaults of their common enemy, much less recover those extensive tracts, from which they had been gradually ejected by the old natives. O'Nial from the North, O'Brien from the South; made dreadful inroads on the English settlements, boasted their hostile intentions, watched every advantage, and fomented and assisted the insurrections of other Irish chieftains. A perpetual state of war oppressed and wasted the country. A want of concert and union among the Irish prevented them from demolishing the whole fabric of English power, by one general and decisive assault.

On

On the other hand, the divisions and jealousies of the English race, and the neglect of those, who, despising the country from whence they drew their revenues, absented themselves in England, left the enemy to harass those whom they could not subdue; and obliged the subject to maintain a number of idle guards and borderers, no less vexatious and oppressive than their invaders.

EDWARD, who had been habituated to success and glory, beheld these complicated disorders of his Irish dominions with impatience; and determined to pursue some vigorous measures, both for subduing the Irish, and reforming his English subjects. Lord Lionel his second son, had been affianced in his tender years to Elizabeth, daughter to the late earl of Ulster, and claimed that earldom in right of his wife, as well as the lordship of Connaught, with all the valuable and extensive domains annexed to these titles^a. In all these districts, writs had for many years ran in the prince's name. But this was little more than a formal exercise of authority, not generally acknowledged or obeyed; as the Irish chieftains of Connaught and Tirowen had repossessed themselves of the greatest part of these lands which the late earl enjoyed, and were still labouring to extirpate the remains of his English tenantry. The interests of his son, therefore, as well as the general welfare of the Irish dominions^r, determined Edward to consign the government of Ireland to Lionel, with such powers as might give weight and dignity to his administration, and such a force as might enable him to carry on his military operations with vigour and success^t. With an earnestness and
solemnly

^a Rymer.^r Rot. Can. H.^t Rymer. Pryn.

solemnity which seemed the prelude to some great design, the king's writs were issued to all those nobles of England, of either sex, who held lands in Ireland, summoning them to appear either in person or by proxy before the king and council, there to deliberate on the measures necessary for the defence of this realm; and in the mean time, to hold all the force they could command, in readiness, to attend his son. A royal proclamation was also issued in the several counties of England, that all those of inferior rank who held lands in Ireland, should repair thither to the prince's service. About fifteen hundred men were thus collected. Lord Lionel the general, was attended by Ralph earl of Stafford, James earl of Ormond, Sir John Carew, Sir William Windfore, and other knights and leaders of distinction.

THIS troop, inconsiderable as it may be deemed in these times, yet if duly reinforced and supported by the great lords of Ireland, might have proved of considerable service in repelling and subduing the Irish insurgents. But lord Lionel passed into Ireland with all those unhappy prepossessions and false ideas which interested dependents are careful to infuse into the unguarded minds of princes. Such aggravated representations had been made of the degeneracy of the old English settlers, that he learned to regard the whole race indiscriminately, as unworthy of his confidence, and utterly disaffected to his father's interests and government. He was surrounded by the faction of English birth; he listened to their suggestions; adopted their passions; and by a proclamation dictated by the utmost violence of pride and prejudice, strictly forbade

forbad all the old English, or any of the king's subjects of Irish birth to approach his camp. Thus, he offended and insulted the most powerful party in the realm; who, while they justly clamoured against this ungenerous return to the services of their ancestors, and their own, at the same time derided the infatuated policy, which deprived their new governour of the only assistance which might give the least prospect of success to his operations.

THE prince was thus left with those of English birth, to traverse a strange country, without advice or direction; and to attack an enemy whose character and manner of war were entirely unknown. As the reduction of the northern province was of too much consequence to be undertaken until Leinster should be first secured against the insurgents of the South, the prince first determined to quell the ravagers of the English province, and bent his force against the chieftain of Thomond, their principal supporter. He marched forward without guidance or intelligence. The enemy hovered about his camp, suddenly disappeared, and again renewed their desultory assaults. His men were perplexed, and their progress slow. One of his advanced parties was surprized and attacked with such success, that a considerable number fell upon the field of action. To encrease this mortification, numbers of his soldiers deserted to the enemy. Incidents so alarming roused the prince from his error: and if not too generous, he was at least in too imminent danger to delay the correction of it for a moment. The old English were invited and required by proclamation to attend his standardⁿ; while his father, by a second proclamation, in

in which the perilous situation of lord Lionel was minutely described, commanded all those nobles of the English nation, who had not obeyed his former order, to repair without delay to Ireland, and join the prince's troops, on pain of forfeiture of all their lands and possessions. The invitation to the subjects of Ireland, of the old English race, had a speedier and more salutary effect. They resorted in great numbers to the duke of Clarence^y, (for this title had been now conferred on lord Lionel) and by their assistance he gained considerable advantages over the enemy, so as in a great measure to break the spirit and power of O'Brien.

HE returned, after some successful expeditions of less moment than his flatterers ascribed to them; and resuming the seat of government in the triumph of a conqueror, conferred the honour of knighthood on several of his followers. Such favourable sentiments were conceived of his administration, and such sanguine expectations of his success against the Irish enemy, that the king's subjects^o, both laity and clergy, granted him two years value of their revenues to maintain the war: a liberality the more cheerfully displayed, as his forces had ever been retained within the strictest rules of discipline^r, without burdening the people by those arbitrary exactions which had usually been practised for the maintenance of armies.

THE duke was however soon recalled into England, and left those factions which his own weak conduct had contributed to enflame among the subjects of Ireland, to raise the most dangerous dissensions. English by birth, and English by
race,

race, were become terms of odious distinction ; and every day produced violences, which gradually became considerable enough, to require the immediate interposition of the king^a. He commanded that no English subject born in England, or in Ireland, should make or cause dissention, raise debate, or contumely, under the penalty of imprisonment for two years.

CLARENCE was succeeded by the earl of Ormond, who again resigned to the duke : and he as suddenly left the administration to Sir Thomas Dale, an English knight, of too little consequence to suppress the dissensions of the English, much less to unite them in any service of real moment. So that in the year 1367, Clarence was once more sent over to stem the torrent of corruption and disorder, by the authority of his station. Experience had convinced him that the effectual reduction of the Irish enemy was an arduous task, neither to be undertaken precipitately, nor executed without peril, even if the situation of England could allow him a force adequate to such an attempt. He was by this time too well acquainted with the circumstances of the country in which he governed, not to see and know that the first object of his care should be the reformation of the English settlers. And to this great work he applied with zeal and diligence.

A PARLIAMENT was summoned to meet at Kilkenny, and proved a more respectable and numerous assembly than had hitherto been convened in Ireland. The prelates of Dublin, Cashel, Tuam, Lismore, Waterford, Killaloe, Ossory, Leighlin,

^a Rymer, t. vi. p. 442. A. D. 1364.

Leighlin, Cloyne, obeyed the summons of the king's son. The temporal peers and commons cheerfully attended. Both estates sat together: and the result of their deliberations was that ordinance, known in Ireland by the name of the STATUTE OF KILKENNY.

THE preamble of this statute recites^c, with a decision not without colour, but yet too general and indiscriminate, that the English of the realm of Ireland, before the arrival of the duke of Clarence, were become mere Irish in their language, names, apparel, and manner of living; had rejected the English laws, and submitted to those of the Irish, with whom they had united by marriage-alliance, to the ruin of the general weal.—It was therefore enacted, that marriage, nurture of infants, and gossipred with the Irish, should be considered and punished as high treason.—Again, if any man of English race shall use an Irish name, the Irish language, or the Irish apparel, or any mode or custom of the Irish, the act provides that he shall forfeit lands and tenements, until he hath given security in the court of chancery, to conform in every particular to the English manners; or, if he have no lands, that he shall be imprisoned until the like security be given.—The Brehon law was pronounced, (and justly) to be a pernicious custom and innovation lately introduced among the English subjects. It was therefore ordained that in all their controversies they should be governed by the common law of England; and that whoever should submit to the Irish jurisdiction, was to be adjudged guilty of high-treason. As the English had been accustomed to make war and peace with
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the bordering enemy at their pleasure, they were now expressly prohibited from levying war upon the Irish, without special warrant from the state. It was also made highly penal to the English, to permit their Irish neighbours to graze their lands, to present them to ecclesiastical benefices, or to receive them into monasteries or religious houses; to entertain their bards, who perverted their imaginations by romantic tales; or their news tellers, who seduced them by false reports. It was made felony to impose or cede any forces upon the English subject against his will. And as the royal liberties and franchises were become sanctuaries for malefactors, express power was given to the king's sheriffs to enter into all franchises, and there to apprehend felons or traitors. Lastly, because the great lords, when they levied forces for the public service, acted with partiality, and laid unequal burdens upon the subjects, it was ordained, that four wardens of the peace in every county should adjudge what men and armour every lord or tenant should provide. The statute was promulged with particular solemnity; and the spiritual lords, the better to enforce obedience, denounced an excommunication on those who should presume to violate it in any instance.

SUCH were the institutions of this assembly, quoted in Ireland with reverence, confirmed and renewed in after-times, as of most salutary influence. The attention of Clarence and his counsellors was evidently confined to the reformation of the king's English subjects of Ireland. Among these, and these only, the Brehon law was a lewd CUSTOM CREPT IN OF LATER DAYS. They and they only were forbidden to submit to its decisions.

cisions. And he who asserts that this statute was a formal abolition of the Brehon jurisdiction in every part of Ireland, should consider what were the present circumstances of this kingdom, and what the object and intention of the statute of Kilkenny; what authority Clarence or his father claimed, what power they possessed, to give this edict such extensive force and influence. Their parliament was not so absurd as to dictate laws to the southern and northern Irish, the declared enemies of their authority, and desperate invaders of their lands. Nor had they equity or good policy to endeavour to root out the evil customs of those Irish who submitted to the English government, and in their room to plant those salutary institutions by which they themselves were governed and defended. Extensive views, liberal sentiments, and a generous zeal for public happiness, must have prompted them to some measures for conciliating the affections, as well as subduing the persons and possessions of the Irish; must have led them to demonstrate that they were the protectors and benefactors, not the arbitrary masters of those Irish natives whom they held in subjection; and to convince the most obstinate insurgents, that an honourable submission to the king of England was the only means of rescuing them from the miseries of their own petty factions and tyrannies; a glorious exchange of the rudeness, the disorders, and distresses of anarchy, for the peace, the dignity, and the valuable advantages of social and civil life.

BUT pride and self-interest concurred in regarding and representing the Irish as a race utterly irreclaimable. The desperate resistance of the oppressed, or the violences of national vanity, were

were readily mistaken for the outrages of a natural cruelty and barbarism. The task of reclaiming those natives might indeed have proved difficult : and what is not to be projected but by an exalted genius, nor executed but by vigour, abilities, prudence, and patience, a contracted mind and indolent spirit readily believe to be impossible, upon the crafty suggestions of those who are interested, or think themselves interested, to defeat the glorious design. The reign of a renowned monarch in England, and the presence of his son in Ireland, the husband of a lady of Irish birth, and of an illustrious family, an heiress of vast possessions, were circumstances highly favourable to a generous conciliating scheme, whose apparent equity might warrant the addition of military vigour against the most desperate and abandoned. The opportunity was now lost ; nor was it recovered for ages.

YET still the solemnity with which these laws were made and promulged, the severe penalties by which they were enforced, the presence of the royal governour, his laudable attention to preserve discipline, and to prevent grievances within the sphere of his authority, had no inconsiderable effect. The old English were restrained, and in some degree reformed ; and the consequences appeared in the encrease of the revenue, and the suspension of those petty hostilities which the English lords had usually maintained against each other^r. But the wisest institutions could have no permanent effect, without an administration respectable by its strength, and conducted with that vigour necessary to strike a lasting awe into the proud and turbulent. They had been too long habituated to disregard authority,

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to support their consequence by the terrour of their tumultuous followers, and to decide their controversies in the field. On the departure therefore of the duke of Clarence, when the young Earl of Desmond had been entrusted with the government, the state was once more embroiled by the violences of the family of Bermingham, which the new lord justice in vain endeavoured to suppress. He was obliged to treat with these ravagers as with a foreign power, and to end the brawl by a mutual exchange of prisoners; while the Irish chieftains of Thomond and Connaught entered into a formidable confederacy, and threatened extensive and desperate hostilities. The alarming prospect determined king Edward to renew his orders to all those who absented themselves from their Irish lands, to repair to Ireland. A parliament was summoned to deliberate on the measures most effectual for the security of the king's Irish dominions; and Sir William Windfore, an English knight, who had served under the duke of Clarence, was appointed the king's lieutenant. In the parliament which he convened at Kilkenny, a subsidy of three thousand pounds, and another of two thousand in a following session, were granted for support of the war against the Irish.

BUT while this assembly was deliberating and providing, the forces of O'Brien and O'Connor were in the field, without any army to oppose them, but such troops as the borderers and neighbouring lords of Munster could collect. The earl of Desmond, particularly interested to secure his own lands from depredation, was the first to rise up against the enemy. He encountered them near the
monastery

monastery of Mayo ; but his inferiour numbers, hastily raised and ill appointed, received a total defeat. Their leader was slain, and several of his noblest followers fell into the hands of the enemy. The lieutenant, whose military operations had as yet effected nothing more important than the reduction of some inconsiderable septs of Leinster, was determined by this intelligence to lead his forces into the South. But the enemy, as usual, had retired to their inaccessible haunts, when the victory was obtained, and left Windfore to make war on some inferiour chieftains. The only service he could perform was that of forcing one of these to give hostages, as a surety for keeping the peace with some neighbouring English settlements, and to restore some ornaments of which he had plundered their churches. To restrain these numerous insurrections, by which every part of the English territories was perpetually infested, the influence not only of the powerful English, but the well-affected Irish, was employed. Several of these were engaged and paid by the king, to watch the motions of their countrymen, and to oppose their violences.

ON the departure of Windfore, Maurice earl of Kildare succeeded to the administration of a dis-tempered and disordered state. So considerable was the progress of the Irish natives, and such extensive tracts had they recovered from the English settlers^x, that the king was obliged to exonerate the lands from scutage which they had seized, and to direct that those only should be charged with this service, which his English subjects still retained in actual possession. Such conceptions had been formed

x Pryn. Anim. p. 302.

formed of the state of Ireland, and the disorders of its inhabitants, that even they who had received Irish grants, could neither be persuaded to repair thither, nor to send any persons to the custody of their lands, notwithstanding the reiterated edicts of the king. The still encreasing tumults in the government of Sir Robert Ashton, successor to Kildare, served to encrease the horror and detestation conceived of this country. The evils of war and commotion are, at a distance, generally related with pathetic force and aggravation: and prejudice and credulity listen to the most extravagant representations. When Sir Richard Pembridge, one of the king's servants, and warden of the Cinque Ports, had been appointed to the government of Ireland^x, he shuddered at the thought of ruling in a country overspread with barbarous and malignant savages. He refused to execute his commission; and it was adjudged that this refusal was strictly legal; for that, residence in Ireland, even in the station assigned to him, was but an honourable exile; and that no man could by law be forced to abandon his country, except in case of abjuration for felony, or by act of parliament.

THE administration of Irish government was therefore again assigned to Sir William Windfore. His former government had not been unimpeached. It had been represented to the king, that in a parliament held by him in Dublin^y, a proposal had been made to grant a supply by certain duties highly oppressive and injurious to the subject; that the proposal had been rejected; that the minority presumed to assemble separately, as if they were a regular parliament, and imposed these duties for three

^x Coke, 2 Inst.

^y Pryn. Anim. p. 303.

years ; and that Windfore, when this pretended act came to be enrolled, altered the term by his own authority, and made the grant perpetual. But though the king directed that this grievous charge should be examined, and the injurious proceedings reversed, yet a misdemeanour, which indicated zeal for the king's service, was easily forgiven : and Windfore was thought so necessary in the present state of Irish affairs, that he was even allowed to dictate the conditions on which he would accept his office. He promised only the custody of the king's lands not to make any offensive war, not to recover any of those districts which had been conquered by the Irish. He obtained a new order for the attendance and assistance of absentees ; together with an annual appointment of eleven thousand two hundred pounds, to defray the charges of his government ; a sum which exceeded the whole Irish revenue. For we are assured by Sir John Davys, on the most accurate research, that the whole revenue of the realm of Ireland, certain and casual, did not amount to ten thousand pounds annually, though the medium be taken from the best seven years, during the long reign of Edward the third.

BUT neither the vigilance nor success of Sir William Windfore corresponded with the expectations formed of his government. Far from repressing the neighbouring insurgents, he could not even procure the necessary information of their haunts, to which they retired after a successful inroad, and from whence they issued, on the prospect of executing some sudden scheme of violence with impunity. He found no means more effectual to

secure the English settlements; than to hire the Irish chieftains to oppose their countrymen. Pensions were given to purchase their assistance, and to prevent their hostilities. When the stipulated price was at any time delayed, they instantly rose in arms with double fury, and forced a prompt payment from the king's exchequer. The same system was continued during the administration of the earl of Ormond, successor to Windfore. A precarious peace was thus purchased from the Irish, and perpetually violated by their faithless and precipitate insurrections.

THIS weak and disordered state of Irish government, gave rise to a transaction extraordinary, and for several measures worthy of notice^r. It shall be related for the present without comment or observation. The parliament of England grew uneasy under the burden of supporting the king's Irish dominions^v; they remonstrated; they solicited that strict enquiry should be made into the deficiencies of the royal revenues in this realm. The king was no less impatient to find any part of the supplies destined to his military service, diverted to a purpose which he deemed of much less moment, the support of a disordered government in Ireland. An agent called Nicholas Dagworth, was dispatched into this country^r. His instructions were to represent the necessities of the crown, and the grievous deficiencies of the Irish revenue; to convince the king's ministers of the necessity of exerting themselves for the interests of their royal master.* It was particularly directed that an Irish parliament should be convened without delay, for the

^r MS. Rawlinson, in Bib. Bodl. Oxon. S. S. p. 7.

^v Rot. Turr. Berm. 49. Ed. III.

^r A. D. 1376.

the purpose of granting such a liberal subsidy, as should provide not only for the exigencies of their own state, but for the assistance of their sovereign in his foreign wars. The parliament was assembled : they pleaded the poverty of the realm, and refused the supplies. Edward was provoked. He issued his writs of summons both to the clergy and laity. The bishops were commanded to chuse two of the clergy in each diocese ; the commons to chuse two laymen of each county, to represent the lords and commons of that county ; the cities and boroughs, in like manner, each to elect two citizens and burgessees. The assembly was directed to repair to the king in England, to treat, consult, and agree with him and his council, as well on the government of the land of Ireland, as the aid and support of the king's war.

WE have the answers of the archbishop of Armagh, and of the county of Dublin, to this summons, distinctly recorded. " We are not bound," said the prelate, " agreeably to the liberties, privileges, rights, laws and customs of the church and land of Ireland, to elect any of our clergy, and to send them to any part of England, for the purpose of holding parliaments or councils in England. Yet, on account of our reverence to our lord the king of England, and the now imminent necessity of the land aforesaid, saving to us and to the lords and commons of the said land, all rights, privileges, liberties, laws, and customs before mentioned, we have elected representatives to repair to the king in England, to treat and consult with him and his council. Except, however, that we do by no means grant

“ to our said representatives any power of assenting
 “ to any burdens or subsidies to be imposed on us or
 “ our clergy, to which we cannot yield by reason
 “ of our poverty and daily expence in defending
 “ the land against the Irish enemy,”

In like manner we find the county of Dublin^a at first electing their representatives without power or authority to consent to the imposition of any burdens. The king complained of the election as insufficient and irregular; and the sheriff was directed to make another return in presence of the treasurer, and chief justice of the King's Bench. Difficulties were started, and delays contrived. At length the nobles and commons “ unanimously
 “ and with one voice declare, that according to
 “ the rights, privileges, liberties, laws and customs
 “ of the land of Ireland, enjoyed from the time
 “ of the conquest of said land, they are not bound
 “ to send any persons from the land of Ireland to
 “ to the parliament or council of our lord the
 “ king in England, to treat, consult, or agree
 “ with our lord the king in England, as the writ
 “ requires. Notwithstanding, on account of their
 “ reverence, and the necessity and present distress
 “ of the said land, they have elected representa-
 “ tives to repair to the king, and to treat and
 “ consult with him and his council; reserving to
 “ themselves the power of yielding or agreeing to
 “ any subsidies.” At the same time protesting,
 “ that their present compliance is not hereafter
 “ to be taken in prejudice to the rights, privileges,
 “ laws, and customs, which the lords and com-
 “ mons, from the time of the conquest of the
 “ land of Ireland, have enjoyed, in consideration
 of

^a Ibid.

“ of the various burdens which the said lords and
 “ commons have borne, and still do bear, and
 “ which for the future they cannot support—*nisi*
 “ *Dominus Rex manum suam melius apponere volu-*
 “ *erit.*”

WHAT was the result of this notable controversy between Edward and his subjects of Ireland, or whether, or how far the king's necessities were supplied, we are not distinctly informed. It only appears that the Irish representatives sat at Westminster; and that their wages were levied on the dioceses, counties and boroughs, which had chosen them.

IN the mean time the state of Irish government still continued to be disordered and embroiled. The English interest gradually declined; and the connections of the king's subjects with the original inhabitants, occasioned by their vicinity and necessary intercourse, in despite of all legal injunctions, obliged the king to relax the severity of the statutes of Kilkenny, in cases where they proved impracticable, or oppressive in the execution. It was the perverse fate of Ireland to suffer more from the most renowned than the weakest of English monarchs. Kings possessed with vast schemes of foreign conquest, had little attention to those complicated disorders which required the utmost circumspection to compose, and little leisure to apply the necessary remedies. Their Irish deputies, far from being equal to the momentous design, were generally too weak to subdue, and too prejudiced to conciliate the most offensive disturbers of the public peace. The perpetual hostility in which

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the different parties lived, effectually prevented the introduction of those arts, which contribute to the comfort and refinement of mankind^A. Even foreign merchants could not venture into so dangerous a country, without particular letters of protection from the throne. The perpetual succession of new adventurers from England, led by interest or necessity, served only to enflame dissension, instead of introducing any essential improvement. Lawyers sent from England were notoriously insufficient, if not corrupt; and as such, had frequently been the objects of complaint. The meanness of the English clergy was only redeemed by their implicit attachment to the crown. Even prelates were commonly made the inferiour agents of government in collecting forces, and raising war against the Irish enemy^T; but were not to be enticed into this service, unless by remittances from the exchequer. Attendance in parliament they dreaded as the greatest hardship; and either recurred to mean excuses to avert the penalty of absence, or sued to the king to be exempted by patent from contributing or assenting to those laws, by which they were to be governed.



C H A P. VI.

Distresses of Ireland at the accession of Richard the second.—Measures devised to relieve them.—Edmund and Roger Mortimer lords deputies.—Ireland infested by the French and Scots.—Philip de Courtney an oppressive governour.—Earl of Oxford created marquess of Dublin.—Invested with the dominion of Ireland.—Supplied with money and forces.—Marches towards his government.—Returns to London.—Created duke of Ireland.—His disgrace, defeat, and flight.—His lordship of Ireland resumed.—Stanly and Ormond chief governours.—Maintenance of the English power burdensome.—Duke of Gloucester prepares to undertake the administration of Ireland.—Prevented by the king—who resolves on an expedition into Ireland.—Motives of this expedition.—His arrival in Ireland.—His forces and attendants.—Expectations formed from his presence.—Terror and submissions of the Irish chieftains.—Their homage.—Their stipulations.—The Irish chieftains entertained in Dublin.—Their behaviour.—Their answer to the king's offer to create them knights.—They are knighted, and feasted.—Truce granted to the degenerate English.—Richard solicited to return to England.—He commits the government of Ireland to the earl of Marche, and embarks.—No real advantages derived from his expedition.—Insurrection of the Irish of Leinster.—Earl of Marche slain.—Richard resolves to avenge his death.—His fatal security.—His second expedition into Ireland.—Weakness of his conduct.—Art. Mac-Murchad barrages the royal army.—Their distress and dejection.—Richard retreats.—Parley of Mac-Murchad.—His interview

with the duke of Gloucester.—His insolent overtures.—Resentment of Richard.—Fatal intelligence received.—Richard betrayed, abandoned, and deposed.

THE death of Edward the third, and the accession of his young grand-son, had no immediate effect upon the affairs of Ireland. The Irish, in the remote districts, still continued their hostilities, which had been suspended or resumed, as their particular interests directed, with little respect to the faith of treaties^N. Thus by surprizing, wasting, and harrassing the English districts, they forced the inhabitants to abandon their lands, or to hold them in vassalage to the Irish; so as to encrease the public grievance arising from the desertion and degeneracy of the English, and gradually to confine the royal territories within narrower bounds. The districts more contiguous to the seat of English government were with difficulty maintained, and perpetually disturbed by insurrections, which could not be suppressed by the power, nor prevented by the pensions of government. The parliament of England continued to express their uneasiness, at the expence attending the maintenance of the king's Irish dominions. The subjects of Ireland, on the other hand, repeated their complaints of the vast numbers of nobility and gentry of England, who abandoned their Irish land, and left the residents unequal to the charge and labour necessary for the public cause. This grievance was represented to the king; and by a new law it was ordained^Y, that the absentees should either repair to their Irish lands, or send sufficient deputies to provide for their defence,

^N Davis.

^Y Pryn, Rymer.

defence, else be taxed to the amount of two-thirds of their Irish revenues, to be applied to the service of this kingdom; with an exception of those immediately engaged in the king's service^r, students of the universities, and those absent by licence under the great seal of England, who were to be taxed only one-third of their revenues. At the same time the king granted to his Irish subjects a liberty to dig for mines, paying him a ninth of their produce; to coin money at the royal mint in Dublin; and to hold a free trade with Portugal, *for the great relief of Ireland*, as the grant expresses it.

SUCH devices were the more necessary, as the treasury of England was remarkably exhausted; while the nation was at war with France, Spain and Scotland, which though faintly carried on by each of the contending powers, yet required such supplies as obliged the state to have recourse to unusual impositions on the subject. When the public exigencies required a poll-tax so odious as to produce insurrection and rebellion, it was natural to consider the deficiencies of the revenue of Ireland with impatience, and to take every measure for preventing this part of the king's Dominions from being a burden, if it could not contribute to the general interestⁿ. Sir Nicholas Dagworth, an English knight, whose abilities, integrity, and experience in Irish affairs, recommended him to the royal confidence, was appointed to repair to Ireland with a commission to survey the possessions of the crown, to enquire into the conduct of the king's officers, and particularly those to whom the revenue had been intrusted. To

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give the administration greater dignity, Edmund Mortimer, earl of Marche and Ulster, son to Lionel duke of Clarence, was appointed vicegerent; and on his death the same station was conferred on his young son Roger, and the government administered by his uncle and guardian Thomas Mortimer, as lord deputy. As the present favourite object was to make Ireland contribute to the exigencies of state, by the king's letters addressed to earl Roger, a grand parliament was directed to be convened in this kingdom, to consult not only on the internal regulations and good government of the Irish dominions, but on the means of contributing to the exigencies of foreign affairs, and enabling the king to support the burden of his wars.

His Irish subjects had already suffered by the inroads of the king's enemies. The French and Scots had frequently infested their coasts. The galleys of France and Spain had made very formidable descents on Ireland: so as to call forth the English navy to oppose them. In the harbour of Kinfale, whither the enemy had been driven by the English fleet, an engagement was fought, in which the inhabitants contributed to the victory. The French and Spaniards lost a considerable number of their men, several of their galleys, and twenty English vessels which had been made their prizes. But although the Irish subjects had thus found, that their immediate interests were concerned to support the measures of the throne, yet it doth not appear, that their parliament was either disposed or enabled to grant any considerable supply. A minor administration in Ireland was probably found to be attended with the same inconveniences as a minor reign in England. At least the young earl was quickly

quickly recalled, and the government of Ireland entrusted to Philip de Courtney, a noble baron allied to the king, who was invested with large powers, and by patent allowed to hold his office for ten years. But such was the extreme violence and oppression of this governour^r, that the king not only found it necessary to supersede him, but ordered him to be arrested, and his effects seized, to answer for the charges of injustice and oppression, urged by the aggrieved parties. The particulars of this transaction, if distinctly recorded, might possibly have done honour to the spirit of those who prosecuted this injurious governour.

BUT the situation of king Richard, the weakness of his understanding, and the violence of his passions, soon produced a new and extraordinary change in the government of Ireland. The subjection in which he had been held by his uncles, necessary as it might be to his incapacity, was yet highly mortifying to his pride. Disgusted particularly by the restraints, which the turbulent duke of Gloucester imposed on his weakness, he fled for refuge into the arms of a favourite; and, with the usual infatuation of undiscerning and inexperienced princes, resigned himself implicitly to Robert de Vere, earl of Oxford, a young nobleman of a gay and captivating deportment, and of such corrupt manners as rendered him a prompt and complying agent to the king's pleasures. The public declarations of attachment made by the incautious king soon increased the consequence of this lord: flattery enflamed his pride, power gave new violence to his sensual passions; and in the gratification of both, the partiality of his royal master

master was unbounded. Richard permitted him to repudiate his own kinfwoman, whom he had bestowed on him in marriage, in order to enable him to wed a foreigner, for whom he had conceived an adulterous affection". At the same time the earl was invidiously loaded with honours, which, while his vanity was most highly gratified, prepared the way for his ruin. He was first created marquis of Dublin; and to raise the favourite to the highest degree of sovereignty in his power, Richard, by the same patent, granted to him and his heirs the entire dominion of Ireland, to be held of the crown by liege-homage. Those lands and cities formerly reserved to the crown, and those hereditary to the nobles and barons of Ireland, were indeed excepted; and the earl was bound, as soon as he should complete the conquest of the kingdom, to pay into the English exchequer annually, during his life, the sum of five thousand marks. In every other particular he had the entire government and dominion of the kingdom, was vested with all the lands he should gain by his arms, and empowered to appoint all officers of state and justice, who were to act in his name, and by his authority.

THE parliament, possibly not displeased that this lord should be employed at a distance from the king, made little difficulty of approving this important grant*. They even consented to give the marquis a debt of thirty thousand marks due by the king of France, provided he should pass over into Ireland, and effectually suppress the insurrections which still raged in many of the English counties. Five hundred men at arms,
and

and one thousand archers, were granted to him for the conquest of this land, for two years, while his officers of state, and council in Ireland, were, at the same time, employed in making the best provisions for defence, which an exhausted treasury and a distracted state could permit. The most extraordinary expectations had been conceived from the presence of a nobleman thus dignified and supported, who marched in a stately progress to take possession of his Irish sovereignty. The king himself accompanied his minion ; but when they had proceeded as far as to Wales, and were on the point of separating, Richard found his affection too violent to support a trial so severe. The marquis returned to London, and the government of Ireland was committed to his deputies.

THE inordinate partiality of the king was not satisfied with the honours already conferred upon his favourite. By a new patent, and this also confirmed by parliament, he was created duke of Ireland, with a new grant of the dominion of this realm during his life, with such powers and reservations as were contained in the former patent. Whether this title was his peculiar designation as a peer of England, or that it was found too offensive to be used in Ireland, it is certain that even after this creation his acts of state in this kingdom were issued in the name of the marquis of Dublin^a. By this title he renewed the treaties formerly made with Mac-Murchad of Leinster, who had consented to keep the peace in consideration of his yearly pension. His letters were addressed to several lords of the English race, forbidding them at their peril to maintain any private feuds

feuds or diffensions, and commanding them to unite in the general defence against all malefactors Irish or English. His deputies were appointed, and their salaries and retinues assigned by the lord marquess, with the assent of his council.

BUT this parade of sovereignty was short lived. The princes of the blood, and chief nobility of England, soon formed a party against this favourite and his creatures, too powerful to be resisted. The execution of de la Pole, earl of Suffolk, was the first proof both of their influence and violence; and was succeeded by a commission, whereby the royal authority was delegated to fourteen lords. The king, who had been compelled to sign and swear to the observance of this act, in vain endeavoured to rescind it. The judges pronounced it illegal; and to maintain it, treason; but the lords took up arms to support it. The favourite and his friends were denounced enemies to the state^d. The judges were condemned to die for their extrajudicial opinion; but, as a favour and indulgence, some of them were banished, with other enemies of the triumphant faction, into Ireland. The duke of Ireland, after some ineffectual attempts to rescue his royal master from the power of these haughty lords, was defeated by the earl of Derby, and driven into the Low Countries; and the king was obliged to notify to his Irish ministers^e, that the late marquess of Dublin had forfeited all his grants, that no acts of state were for the future to be executed under his signet; but that the king's great seal was to be reassumed, the whole administration of government conducted in his name, and by his immediate authority, and the

^d Rym. t. vii. p. 590.

^e A. D. 1388.

the royal standards and ensigns only used in all military expeditions^x.

THE government of Ireland was now committed to deputies; to Sir John Stanly first, afterwards to the earl of Ormond, who, with such assistance and support as they could obtain, acted with becoming vigour, and not without success. O'Nial, the powerful, and turbulent enemy of the North, either wasted and harassed by a state of perpetual hostility, or desirous to secure the possessions he had lately acquired by an advantageous treaty, surrendered both himself and his son to Stanly; and with all the affected humiliation of a man deeply contrite for his opposition to English government, consented to become liege-man to the king^y, to restore the duties which he received from Ulster to the family of the earl of Ulster, who formerly enjoyed them; and gave hostages as a mark of his submission, and a surety of his future fidelity. Ormond was chiefly employed in quelling the insurrections of the South; and his administration was distinguished by a victory of some consequence, gained near Kilkenny, over a large army of Irish insurgents.

BUT treaties ill-maintained, and victories gained at the expence of all that could be torn from the oppressed and ravaged subject, were of little moment in rescuing the land from the evils of war and desolation. The disordered state of Ireland was a constant subject of complaint, and afforded a never-failing pretence to Richard for demanding subsidies from his parliament^r. The parliament on the other hand, ceased not to inveigh against the irregularities

^x Ib. p. 577.

^y Rot. Tur. Berm.

^r Cox.

gularities of Irish administration, or to remonstrate against the heavy burden of providing for the exigencies of state, and maintaining the dominion of Ireland". The royal mandate was issued for levying the tax imposed on absentees; commissioners were appointed to enquire into the concealed debts due to the crown in Ireland, and to exact them with punctuality; subsidies were demanded in the parliament of Ireland from particular counties most exposed, and their grants carefully collected; talliages and anticipations of the revenue were devised, to supply the pressing exigencies of state. Still the great business of defence was weakly and imperfectly conducted; and the king frequently roused from his voluptuous indolence and dissipation, by affecting representations of the distresses of his Irish subjects, and the insolence and dangerous progress of the insurgents. Gloucester, the king's uncle, made a tender of his services, to repair to Ireland in person, and to labour for the general pacification of this disordered country. Some forces were prepared; the necessary provisions made for the departure of this new vice-roy. The enemies of English government in Ireland were terrified at the report of a prince of the royal blood, of distinguished abilities, rigid, active, and enterprising, and attended with a considerable force, preparing to chastise their outrages, and support the authority of the crown of England. The expectations of all men were prepared for an administration of extraordinary strength and vigour. The hopes of those well affected to the crown were elevated at the happy prospect of an end to all their grievances and disorders; the Irish chieftains and their adherents were ready to sue for peace; when

when at the very moment that the duke was to embark with all his train, he received a letter from his nephew, forbidding his departure, as the king himself had resolved to make an expedition into Ireland, and to take this part of his dominions into his own immediate care.

THE sudden recollection of the danger to be apprehended from a powerful and popular prince, the head of a discontented faction, invested with high authority, and now the commander of a considerable force, might have naturally determined Richard to an act apparently so capricious; or, if not possessed with that suspicion which frequently accompanies an illiberal and malignant spirit, his flatterers, no doubt were ready to point out the danger, and to inspire him with the most unfavourable sentiments of his uncle. As to his own professions of engaging in the Irish war, they might possibly have been at first merely intended as a pretence for raising subsidies from his people. Historians however assign a motive for this undertaking, not unsuitable to the meanness of his character^x: we are told, that by marrying a princess of Bohemia, he had conceived the vain expectation of being elected emperor of Germany: that ambassadours were actually sent to solicit his election, from whose negotiations he had been so possessed with hopes of immediate success, that he already assumed the port of his imaginary exaltation, and wasted the vast sums extorted from his people, in a parade the most extravagant and ridiculous. His agents were however finally unsuccessful; and when Richard demanded the reason of this repulse, they freely told him, that the

VOL. I. D d electors

electors had refused to confer the imperial dignity upon a prince who could not recover the dominions gained by his progenitors in France, nor restrain the insolence of his English subjects, nor subdue the enemies of his authority in Ireland. Richard, it seems, was stung with this reproach; and resolving to make some effort to recover his reputation, chose to make Ireland the first scene of his military exploits, as he had there the fairest prospect of success.

THE design once conceived, it was necessary, in the first place, to gain supplies. A parliament readily granted money for this service; the clergy gave them a tenth of their revenues, if he should repair to Ireland in person; otherwise but half that sum: which plainly intimated that his people suspected the sincerity of his professions. Levies and preparations were carried on with becoming spirit. In the mean time the death of his beloved queen plunged Richard into the deepest anguish; an event which suspended his preparations for a while, but which is said to have finally determined him to proceed in his expedition into Ireland; in order to fly from the scenes of their former intercourse, and to divert his melancholy by the busy occupations of war and government. Sir Thomas Scroop was sent before to notify his approach, and to prepare for his reception; and in the month of October of the year 1394^r, Richard landed at Waterford with a royal army, consisting of four thousand men at arms, and thirty thousand archers; and attended by the duke of Gloucester, the earls of Nottingham and Rutland, Thomas lord Piercy, and other distinguished personages.

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THE critical period seemed to have now arrived, which was to put an end to all the disorders and distresses of the Irish nation. An army commanded by some of the prime nobility of England, with the monarch at their head, more than sufficient to subdue the scattered, disordered, and disunited troops of the old natives, the presence of the king to inspect the conduct of his ministers, to hear and examine the complaints of his subjects, as well as of those who affected to have been driven unwillingly to hostilities, to do justice equally and impartially to all, without danger of being seduced by artful falsehoods, and interested misrepresentations, were circumstances of considerable moment, if duly improved; and if united with a liberal and equitable spirit of policy, must have established the authority of English government, and the general pacification and civility of the kingdom, upon the firmest basis. The Irish chieftains were justly sensible of their own total inability to encounter the royal army. No toparch could lead into the field any provincial body of troops at all proportionable to such a force; and unconnected with those of other districts, and indeed scarcely interested in their fortunes, they had formed no confederacy, nor made any provision for resistance. The Irish enemies of Leinster concealed themselves in their woods and mountains; from whence issuing occasionally, they made some inconsiderable attacks on the advanced guards, or detached parties of the English army; but soon convinced of their danger, and prompted by the example of their countrymen in other provinces, they sued for peace, and offered to submit in the humblest manner to the king. The insurgents of Thomond and Ulster were earnest to avert the storm, and readily

consented to make their submissions. To do homage to the king, to pay tribute, and to keep the peace inviolate, were the only terms which the several chieftains proposed, or that a prince devoid of exalted sentiments and penetrating views, ever thought of requiring. The pride of the English forbade them to propose the generous scheme of receiving all the inhabitants into the body of English subjects, or of communicating the benefits of a free and equitable constitution to those whom they absurdly called their inferiours. However lively their own regard to liberty, they accounted it a blessing too precious not to be confined to themselves; for they had not yet acquired that extended and comprehensive benevolence, which is the effect of refinement, and deep moral reflection. On the other hand, the immediate danger was too pressing to admit the Irish to insist on that demand of the English polity, which they had often made without effect, and which was considered as an important favour. Their propositions were suddenly offered, and precipitately accepted by a weak prince, surrounded by prejudiced and interested counsellors.

A LETTER received from O'Nial, the powerful chieftain of Ulster, in which he acknowledged himself liege-man to the king, imputed the hostilities, which he had lately commenced, to the necessity of defending himself against the injustice and oppression of the English governors and officers, and offered his submission with the utmost humility, determined the king to march to Drogheda to receive the homage of this chief, and other northern toparchs. Mowbray earl of Nottingham, and earl marshal of England, was therefore empowered,

powered, by a special commission, to receive the homage and fealty of the Leinster chieftains. All the several leaders of those turbulent septs, who had long nestled in this province, and proved a perpetual torment to the English settlers, repaired to the earl, who pitched his camp near Carlow; and by their interpreters, entered into solemn treaty. They did homage and fealty in all the forms of the amplest submission, on bended knees, their heads uncovered, their arms laid aside, and their girdles loosed: and the kiss of peace, to which each was admitted by the lord-marshal, confirmed the reconciliation. What was still more important to the English interest, they bound themselves to relinquish to the crown all the lands and settlements which they held in Leinster, and to serve in the king's wars; who on his part engaged to pay them pensions, and to declare them rightful proprietors of all the lands they should conquer from his enemies in other provinces. Each was by indenture bound in a large penalty, payable in the apostolic chamber, to adhere to their present engagements with true faith and loyalty. And the whole province seemed now completely settled with all possible advantage and security to the English.

IN the mean time the Irish chieftains of the North attended on the king at Drogheda^r, did homage and fealty with the same ceremony, and executed the same indentures. O'Nial, who assumed the title of prince of the northern Irish, was the first to renew his submissions; and for himself, his sons, his nation, his kinsmen, and all his subjects, became liege-man to Richard; promising

^r Cox ex MSS. Lamb.

promising a full renunciation of those duties, which he had levied through the northern province in favour of the earl of Ulster, to whom they had formerly been paid. We may judge of the dismembered and distracted state of Ireland, when we find that the number of the Irish lords who now submitted was no less than seventy-five : all of whom exercised a petty royalty within their respective districts, governed their subjects, led forth their little armies, were jealous of their dignity, and blindly attached to their own unrefined customs and manners.

THE vanity of the king was satisfied, by what he deemed a complete reduction of the island. He led his new foedaries to Dublin, where he lived in that pomp which suited his temper and understanding, and for which he had prepared by transporting all the crown-jewels into Ireland. He treated the Irish chiefs with particular condescension, entertained them at his court, displayed all his magnificence before them, and studied to reconcile them to the English mannersⁿ. Henry Castile, a gentleman of his court, who had been taken prisoner by the Irish, married a lady of their race, and consorted with her countrymen for some years, was found an useful interpreter on this occasion. But though prejudiced in favour of a kinsman who spake their language, they could not be prevailed on to accommodate themselves to the new forms of habit and diet which he recommended. The earl of Ormond, who also spake their language, and was held by them in particular respect, united his endeavours and remonstrances, and wrought them to a sullen compliance. The
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staring courtiers importuned them with such questions, as argued the meanest conceptions of their manners and understandings, and were answered with indignation and affected dignity. The four principal chieftains, O'Nial, O'Connor, O'Brien, and M'Murchad, were made especial objects of favour. They were told that the king was willing to confer the honour of knighthood upon them. They declared themselves astonished, that he should regard this as any accession to their dignity. It was an honour they had received in their earliest years, and now stood in need of no new creation. Every Irish king, said they, makes his son a knight at seven years old, or in case of his death, the next near kinsman. We assemble in a plain. The candidates run with slender launces against a shield erected on a stake. He who breaks the greater number, is distinguished by particular honours annexed to his new dignity. The proof of such early prowess was acknowledged to be highly honourable; but all the great and renowned states of Europe, they were told, concurred in a more solemn form of conferring knighthood. The ceremonial was described minutely; and the chieftains at length prevailed upon to submit to the formalities. They, with some others, received knighthood in the cathedral of Dublin; and the ceremony was succeeded by a magnificent feast, at which the four Irish princes appeared in robes of state, and were seated at the king's table.

THE degenerate English, who had united with the enemy, and of consequence incurred the guilt of treason and rebellion, kept at a distance from the court, and employed agents to effect their reconciliation and pardon. Richard was assured that
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their offence had been the consequence of oppression and injustice, which had driven them from their allegiance, and obliged them to seek the quarters of the enemy, as their only refuge from the violence of the great, the iniquity of those entrusted by the king, the treacherous neglect of their defence, or obstinate denial of redress. Their allegations were in many instances not without foundation; and Richard was too indolent, and too much delighted with his present course of gaiety and pomp, to prosecute them with severity. He hastily granted them a truce of some months, and continued to indulge his vanity by a magnificent display of sovereign power and dignity in the capital. Possessed with the importance of his achievements, he communicated them in form to the duke of York, who had been left regent in England. He pointed out the three distinctions of inhabitants in Ireland; the Irish enemies, the rebels of both races, and the English subjects. The first had submitted, and became his vassals; the rebels, he apprehended, had received but too just provocations, and was therefore disposed to grant them a general pardon; but in this point he desired the advice of his uncle.

YORK, who plainly discovered the vanity of the king, and the careless and precipitate ease with which he concluded a deceitful and precarious accommodation, coldly answered, that he had formerly declared his opinion for a vigorous prosecution of the rebels, until they should be completely subdued, and broken to a peaceable and dutiful demeanour. He affected however to ascribe the intended indulgence of the king to his superiour knowledge, acquired by his residence, of all the circumstances and situation of affairs in Ireland; and

and recommended the exaction of proper fines from all those to whom the royal mercy was extended. Richard had asked advice, but expected congratulations. These however he afterwards received in all the forms of adulation, attended with an earnest request that he would be pleased to return to England*. This request was enforced by the presence of the archbishop of York, and bishop of London, who were deputed to attend on the king in Ireland, and to represent the danger of the church from the encreasing progress of the Lollards. These reformers had been countenanced by the late queen, and secretly, if not avowedly, supported by several of the nobility. They were even emboldened by their own zeal, and the encouragement of their favourers, to apply to the parliament, where the propositions they drew up for an ecclesiastical reform were received with such attention as alarmed the whole body of the clergy. The prelates of York and London earnestly besought the king to defend their church from the dangerous inroads of heresy; affected to place their reliance on his piety and authority, the only human means of preserving the purity of the faith from utter ruin; and pathetically implored him to return without delay. The king was zealous for the established religion, and impatient for the honour of extirpating heretical depravity. He hastened the conclusion of some dispositions for the more regular administration of his government in Ireland, revived and ratified such ordinances as had been found most salutary, appointed Roger Mortimer, earl of Marche, his vicegerent; and embarked for England, after a residence of nine months in Ireland, where his presence had produced so little

little solid advantage, and his royal army been so frivolously employed, that not the smallest accession of territory had been obtained, nor the least extension of the English Pale; no real advantage gained, no effectual remedy applied to the public disorders; but all affairs left precisely in their former state, under a deceitful appearance of tranquillity.

THE only stipulation of real consequence, which had been made, was that whereby the Irish of Leinster were bound to evacuate this province. It now came to be enforced; but, the terrour of a royal army once removed, it was found no easy matter to subdue the affection for their native residences, which possessed the hearts of all the Irish. The agreement had been lightly made, if not insidiously. Pretences were invented, delays affected, objections and difficulties suggested; and the peremptory requisitions of government only served to enrage these boisterous natives, and to drive them into insurrections. Their hostilities were the more violent^r, as they had no reason to expect accommodation or pardon; and the governour the less provided to oppose them, as he had not looked for so sudden an infraction of the late treaty. The flame of war broke out at once in different quarters, and raged with destructive fury. The English lords were called forth against their several invaders, with such forces as they could collect. Two knights of the families of de Burgho and Bermingham were distinguished upon this occasion by no inconsiderable victory over a large party of insurgents. The lieutenant, attended by the earl of Ormond, marched against the turbulent and powerful sept of

of O'Byrnes, and drove them from their lands in Wicklow. But at the very moment of their triumph, while feasts were held, and knights created, in honour of this success; they were confounded by the intelligence of a victory gained by the neighbouring sept of O'Toole, who slaughtered a considerable number of the king's forces. The O'Byrnes, though driven from their habitations, retired into Ossory, and there obstinately continued their hostilities. Mortimer pursued them with more bravery than circumspection^a; was surprized, defeated, and slain upon the field of battle.

THIS petty war, which neither admits nor merits a detail, was sufficient to provide king Richard with such a pretence for another Irish expedition, as suited his genius and understanding. A series of arbitrary and tyrannical measures, oppressions the most severe, exactions of every odious species, and the sums extorted carelessly and wantonly dissipated, murders under the appearance of law, obsequious parliaments formed by intrigue and corruption, and implicitly devoted to the passions of the king, terrified the people, but totally alienated their affections from a prince, who sacrificed the properties and lives of his subjects to luxury, caprice, and malice, with the most careless indifference. The discontents, arising from the vices of his government, fomented by the artifice of faction, had now prepared the way for a violent revolution: and in that moment of apparent tranquillity, which usually precedes a dangerous hurricane in the political system, Richard, vainly relying on an established power, formed a resolution of chastising the insolence of the Irish, and avenging the death

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of Mortimer. His forces were again prepared, and the sums extorted to support a second expedition into Ireland, confirmed the hatred, and afforded a fair pretence for enflaming the discontents of his people.

In spring of the year 1339, his preparations were completed. The duke of York was left regent of England: and his son, the duke of Aumerle, instructed to follow the king with a reinforcement. Richard arrived at Bristol, attended by several nobles, among whom were the duke of Exeter, earl of Salisbury, some prelates, the son of the duke of Gloucester, and the young lord Henry of Lancaster, son to the earl of Hereford. The reports of secret conspiracies, and intended insurrections, were even now conveyed to him, and determined him to send a peremptory mandate to the earl of Northumberland, a suspected lord, to repair without delay to his standard. The earl refused, in gentle and dutiful terms, pleading the danger of leaving the northern borders open to the incursions of the Scots, and representing the importance of attending to the king's interest in his present station, instead of reinforcing an army already more than sufficient for the intended enterprize. Richard, not yet sufficiently alarmed by this evasion, contented himself with proclaiming the earl a traitor, and declaring his lands forfeited; proceeded in his embarkation, and on the thirteenth day of May arrived with his powers at Waterford.

THE whole process of this vain and futile expedition served but to demonstrate the weakness of the leader". Six days were spent at Waterford in the vain parade of receiving the congratulations

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 * Story of Rich. II. his last being in Ireland. By the earl of Totness.

of his Irish subjects. Fourteen more were wasted at Kilkenny, expecting the arrival of the duke of Aumerle, whose delay manifestly betrayed his secret disaffection. It had never once occurred to the inconsiderate king, that Leinster, which was to be the seat of war, had been for some time wasted by hostilities, and could scarcely afford provisions for his unwieldy numbers. But the enemy, who knew full well to what difficulties he must be soon reduced, had the discernment to despise his vain parade; and, encouraged by his delay and inactivity, triumphantly declared their resolution to defend their liberty against the injurious oppressors of their country, even to their last breath; and affected to rejoice, that the period was at length arrived, when English usurpation should receive its final overthrow.

RICHARD was at length prevailed on to march against the enemy commanded by Art Mac-Murchar, who, notwithstanding the pensions he had received, and the submissions he had lately made, was still the inveterate enemy of the English; and in the violence of national pride, enflamed by the prospect of success, vowed the most desperate vengeance against his invaders. To secure himself from the superiour numbers of the enemy he retired to his woods; and at their approach, appeared at the head of three thousand men so well armed and appointed, and with such an appearance of determined valour, as were perfectly astonishing to the English, who had been taught to despise their rude and undisciplined violence. The royal army was drawn out in order of battle, expecting a vigorous attack; but the Irish forces, who thought of nothing less than a regular engagement in

in the field, suddenly disappeared; and Richard, elevated by this retreat, ordered the adjacent villages and houses to be set on fire, and the royal standard to be advanced, under which he created several knights, and among these the young lord Henry of Lancaster, afterwards the illustrious king Henry the fifth, who on this occasion gave the first proofs of his distinguished valour.

To facilitate the pursuit of an enemy who appeared to fly", a large body of peasants was employed to open a passage through the woods, which the Irish had by every means endeavoured to render impassable. As the king's army marched through all the difficulties of an encumbered road, perpetually impeded, and sometimes plunged into deep and dangerous morasses, the enemy frequently assailed them with loud and barbarous ululations; cast their darts with such force as no armour could withstand, slaughtered their detached parties, retired, and advanced with astonishing agility, so as continually to annoy and harass the English forces, though they could not be brought to a general engagement. Some of the Irish lords, less penetrating than their subtle chieftain, and among those his uncle, were indeed terrified by the numbers of the king's forces, and with all the marks of humiliation submitted to Richard. They appeared before him with halters round their necks, fell at his feet, imploring peace and forgiveness, and were graciously received. Art Mac-Murchard was summoned to make the like submissions; and, to prevail upon him to accept of grace, and return to his allegiance, Richard was weak enough to promise large rewards, territories, and castles

castles in Leinster. The Irishman, who well knew the difficulties to which the king's army was reduced, and the impossibility of their subsisting for any time in their present situation, returned a haughty answer of defiance, and declared his resolution of opposing the king of England to the utmost. Richard had the mortification to find, that the distress of his soldiery, which had encouraged the adversary to this insolence, could no longer be concealed, and every day grew more intolerable. Numbers of his men perished by famine; their horses, from want and severity, grew incapable of service; a general gloom spread through his camp, and his bravest knights murmured at their fate, who were to perish in a service attended with so little honour, and such severe distress. A few ships laden with provisions from Dublin having landed on the neighbouring coast, the famished soldiers plunged into the sea, seized and rifled them, shedding each other's blood in a furious contest for relief. The necessity of decamping was too apparent, and too urgent to admit of the least delay. Richard, with his numerous forces, was compelled to retire before an inconsiderable band of enemies whom he had despised, who pursued and incessantly harrassed him in his retreat.

MAC-MURCHARD, however, amidst all the exultation of a pursuing enemy, was not so blinded by his present success, but that he discerned and considered the real extent of his power. Sensible of the king's superiority, and that his present difficulties must determine with his arrival at the capital, which, though he might retard by his incursions, he could not prevent, he embraced the present

A Story of Rich. II. his last being in Ireland. By the earl of Totness.

present moment to attempt an accommodation upon advantageous terms; and by message to the king desired a safe-conduct, that he might repair securely to his camp to offer his propositions of peace; or else, that some lords might be deputed to confer with him. By advice of the council, Gloucester was commissioned to meet him at a place appointed; and for this purpose marched out with a guard of two hundred lances, and one thousand archers. An eye-witness of their interview describes the Irish chieftain, tall of stature, and formed for agility and strength, of an aspect fierce and severe, mounted on a swift and stately horse, without saddle, and darting rapidly from a mountain between two woods adjacent to the sea, attended by his train. At his command they halted at due distance, while their leader, casting the spear from him, which he grasped in his right hand, rushed forward to meet the English lord. The parle was continued for a considerable time. The Irish prince was reminded of his late engagements, his grievous infractions, his attack of the king's vicegerent, and the slaughter both of him and his forces. He proudly answered, by defending his conduct upon such pretences as he could devise; and, after much debate, at last consented to submit, but absolutely refused to be bound to any special composition or conditions. As such an overture was not admissible, the conference was broken off; and Gloucester returned to the king with the provoking intelligence of the result of this interview, and the insolence of Mac-Murchard. The pride of Richard was so severely wounded, that he passionately vowed never to depart from Ireland until he had possessed himself of this rebel alive or dead.

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He had now arrived at Dublin, where he found sufficient relief for his enfeebled army, and was at last reinforced by Aumerle with his forces, a nobleman in whom he placed a blind confidence, and who readily apologized for his delay. Here this ill-fated prince resided for six weeks, while some part of his forces were detached against the enemy, and the royal proclamation issued, promising three hundred marks of gold to any who should seize their leader. Tempestuous weather and contrary winds had cut him off from all intelligence from England during this period; when, at length, a bark arrived, and brought the tremendous news of his total ruin.

From the moment of his departure to Ireland, attended by those Lords who were deemed most devoted to his service, the malcontents of England began to digest their schemes of dethroning him. Their conferences ended in an application to the duke of Hereford, to draw the sword against a prince who had particularly provoked his resentment, first by capriciously banishing him from the realm, and then by depriving him of his inheritance, on the death of his father, the duke of Lancaster. Stimulated by revenge and ambition, he landed in England with an inconsiderable troop, was reinforced by daily encreasing numbers; the regent deserted, and obliged to retire; the kingdom in confusion, and the general hopes of all men fixed upon the popular invader; who, favoured by the clergy, and by virtue of a papal bull, declared rightful inheritor of the crown, traversed the kingdom with his formidable powers, executed several of the king's obnoxious ministers, and, either by

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artifice

r Story of Rich. II. his last being in Ireland. By the earl of Totness.

artifice or terroure, gained some of the most considerable subjects to declare in favour of his cause; among these was the duke of York himself, so that the interests of Richard were forgotten, and his authority fallen into the utmost contempt.

RICHARD heard the invasion and progress of his rival with an abject dismay, and with more of peevish resentment than any reasonable precaution, committed the young lord of Gloucester and lord Henry of Lancaster, prisoners to the castle of Trim. His council advised that he should instantly return to England; Aumerle prevailed on him to stay until his whole army could be at once transported. Salisbury was sent before, to collect the Welchmen, who crowded in great numbers to his standard; were impatient for the king's arrival; shocked at his infatuated delay; still disappointed in their expectations of his appearance, and dispersed. Richard, when he had at length arrived, found the desperation of his affairs complete. He was abandoned by his friends, and deserted by his subjects. By throwing himself into the town of Conway, with his few remaining attendants, he discovered his intentions of returning for shelter into Ireland in his last extremity. But artifice was employed to prevent him. He was betrayed into the hands of his rival; and a reign of weakness, oppression, and tyranny, ended in the solemn deposition of Richard the Second.

A P P E N D I X.

N U M B E R I.

Ex Libro rubro Scaccharii Dublin.

MAGNA CARTA HIBERNIÆ.

REGIS HENRICI TERTII.

XII. DIE NOVEMBRIS, M,CCXVI. ANNO REGNI I.

HENRICUS Dei gratia rex Anglie Dominus Hybernie dux Normannie et Aquitanie et comes Andegavie archiepiscopis episcopis abbatibus comitibus baronibus justiciariis forestariis vicecomitibus prepositis ministris civibus ballivis et fidelibus suis salutem. Sciatis nos intuitu Dei et pro salute anime nostre et omnium antecessorum et successorum nostrorum ad honorem Dei et exaltationem sancte ecclesie et emendationem regni nostri per consilium venerabilium patrum nostrorum domini Gaulonis titulo sancti Martini presbiteri cardinalis apostolice sedis legati Petri Winton' L. de sancto Asapho J. Bathon' & Glastron' S. Exon' R. Cicestr' W. Coventr' W. Roffen' H. London' Menevens' Bangor' et S. Wygorn' episcoporum et nobilium virorum Willielmi Mariscalli comitis Pembroc' Ranulfi comitis Cestr' Williemi de Ferrar' comitis de Derbia Willielmi comitis de Aubomarle Huberti de Burgo Justiciarii nostri Savantii de Malo Leone Willielmi Bruerie patris Willielmi Bruerie filii Roberti de Curtenai Falkesii de Breante Reginaldi de Vautort Walteri de Laci Hugonis de Mortuo Mari Johannis de Monemute Walteri de Beauchamp

Beauchamp Walteri de Clifford Roberti de Mortuo Mari Willielmi de Cantelup' Mathei filii Hereberti Johannis Mariscalli Alani Basset Philippi de Albi-niaco Johannis Extranti et aliorum fidelium nostro-rum.

I. IMPRIMIS concessisse Deo et hac presenti carta nostra confirmasse pro nobis & heredibus nostris inperpetuum quod **HYBERNICANA** ecclesia libera sit et habeat jura sua integra et libertates suas illesas. Concessimus etiam omnibus liberis hominibus de regno nostro pro nobis et heredibus inperpetuum omnes libertates subscriptas habendas et tenendas iis et heredibus suis de nobis et heredibus nostris.

II. Si quis comitum vel baronum nostrorum sive aliorum tenentium de nobis in capite per servicium militare mortuus fuerit et cum decesserit heres suus plene etatis fuerit et relevium debeatur habeat hereditatem suam per antiquum relevium scilicet heres vel heredes comitis de baronia comitis integra per centum libras heres vel heredes baronis de baronia baronis integra per centum libras heres vel heredes militis de feudo militis integro per centum solidos ad plus et qui minus debuerit minus det secundum antiquam consuetudinem feodorum.

III. Si autem heres alicujus talium fuerit infra etatem dominus ejus non habeat custodiam ipsius nec terre sue antequam homagium ejus ceperit et postquam talis heres fuerit in custodia ad etatem pervenerit scilicet viginti et unius annorum habeat hereditatem suam sine relevio et sine fine ita tamen quod si ipse dum infra etatem fuerit miles nichilominus terra remaneat in custodia domini sui usque terminum predictum.

IV. Custos terræ hujus et heredis qui infra etatem fuerit non capiat de terra heredis nisi rationabiles

biles exitus et rationabiles consuetudines et rationalia servicia et hoc sine destructione vel vasto hominum vel rerum et si nos commiserimus custodium alicujus talis terre vicecomiti vel alicui alii qui de exitibus terre illius nobis respondere debeat et ille destructionem de custodia fecerit vel vastum nos ab eo capiemus emendam et terra illa committatur duobus legalibus et discretis hominibus de feodo illo qui de exitibus nobis respondeant vel ei cui nos assignaverimus et si dederimus vel vendiderimus alicui custodiam alicujus talis terre et ille destructionem inde fecerit vel vastum amittat custodiam illam et tradatur duobus legalibus et discretis hominibus de feodo illo qui similiter nobis inde respondeant sicut predictum est.

V. CUSTOS autem quamdiu custodiam terre habuerit sustentet domos parcos vivaria stagna molendina et cetera ad illam terram pertinentia de exitibus terre ejusdem et reddet heredi cum ad plenam etatem pervenerit terram suam totam instauratam de carucis et omnibus aliis rebus ad minus secundum quod illam recepit. Hec omnia observentur de custodia archiepiscopatum episcopatum abbatiarum prioratum ecclesiarum et dignitatum vacantium excepto quod custodie hujus vendi non debent.

VI. HEREDES maritentur absque disparagatione.

VII. VIDUA post mortem mariti sui statim et sine dilatione aliqua habeat maritagium suum et hereditatem suam nec aliquid det pro dote sua vel maritagio vel hereditate sua quam hereditatem maritus suus et ipsa tenuerunt die obitus ipsius mariti et maneat vidua in domo mariti sui per quadraginta dies post mortem ipsius mariti sui infra quos ei assignetur dos sua nisi prius ei fuerit assignata vel nisi domus illa fuerit castrum et si de castro recesserit

rit statim provideatur ei domus competens in qua possit honeste morari quousque dos sua ei assignetur secundum quod predictum est.

VIII. NULLA vidua distringatur ad se maritandum dum voluerit vivere sine marito ita tamen quod securitatem faciat quod se non maritabit sine assensu nostro si de nobis tenuit vel sine assensu domini sui si de alio tenuerit.

IX. Nos vel ballivi nostri non faciemus terram aliquam nec redditum pro debito aliquo quamdiu catalla debitoris presentia sufficiunt ad debitum reddendum et ipse debitor paratus inde satisfacere nec plegium ipsius debitoris distringatur quamdiu ipse capitalis debitor sufficit ad solutionem debiti et si capitalis debitor defecerit in solutione non habens unde reddat aut reddere noluerit cum possit plegii respondeant de debito et si voluerint habeant terras et redditus debitoris quousque sit eis satisfactum de debito quod ante pro eo solverunt nisi capitalis debitor monstraverit se esse quietum versus eosdem plegios.

X. CIVITAS DUBLIN' habeat omnes antiquas libertates et liberas consuetudines suas preterea volumus et concedimus quod omnes alie civitates ville et burgi et omnes portus habeant omnes libertates et liberas consuetudines suas.

XI. NULLUS distringatur ad faciendum majus servitium de feodo militis nec de alio libero tenemento quam inde debetur.

XII. COMMUNIA placita non sequantur curiam nostram sed teneantur in aliquo certo loco.

XIII. RECOGNITIONES de nova disseisina de morte antecessoris et de ultima presentatione non capitantur nisi in suis comitatibus et hoc modo Nos vel si extra regnum fuerimus capitalis justiciarius
noster

noster mittemus duos justiciarios per unumquemque comitatum per quatuor vices in anno qui cum quatuor militibus cujuslibet comitatus electis per comitatum capiant et in comitatu et in die et loco comitatus assisas predictas.

XIV. Et si in die comitatus assise predictæ capi non possunt tot milites et libere tenentes remaneant de illis qui interfuerunt comitatui die illo per quos possint sufficienter judicia fieri secundum quod negotium fuerit majus vel minus.

XV. LIBER homo non amerciatur pro parvo delicto nisi secundum modum delicti et pro magno delicto secundum magnitudinem delicti salvo contentamento suo et mercator eodem modo salva mercandasia sua et villanus eodem modo amerciatur salvo wannagio suo si inciderit in misericordiam nostram et nulla predictarum misericordiarum ponatur nisi per sacramentum proborum et legalium hominum de visneto.

XVI. COMITES et barones non amercientur nisi per pares suos et non nisi secundum modum delicti.

XVII. NULLUS clericus amerciatur nisi secundum formam predictorum et non secundum quantitatem beneficii sui ecclesiastici.

XVIII. NEC villa nec homo distringetur facere pontes ad riparias nisi qui ab antiquo et de jure facere debent.

XIX. NULLUS vicecomes constabularius coronatores vel alii ballivi nostri teneant placita corone nostre.

XX. Si aliquis tenens de nobis laicum feodum moriatur et vicecomes vel ballivus noster ostendat literas nostras patentes de summonitione nostra de debito quod defunctus nobis debuit liceat vicecomiti vel ballivo nostro attachiare et imbreviare catalla

catalla defuncti inventa in laico feodo ad valentiam illius debiti per visum legalium hominum ita tamen quod nichil inde amoveatur donec persolvatur nobis debitum quod clarum fuerit et residuum relinquatur executoribus ad faciendum testamentum defuncti et si nichil debeatur ab ipso omnia catalla cedant defuncto salva uxori sue et pueris suis rationabilibus partibus suis.

XXI. NULLUS constabularius vel ejus ballivus capiat blada vel alia catalla alicujus qui non sit de villa ubi castrum suum est nisi statim inde reddat denarios vel respectum inde habere possit de voluntate venditoris si autem de villa fuerit teneatur infra tres septimanas precium reddere.

XXII. NULLUS constabularius distringat aliquem militem ad dandum denarios pro custodia castri si ipse eam facere voluerit in propria persona sua vel per alium probum hominem si ipse eam facere non possit propter rationabilem causam et si nos duxerimus vel miserimus eum in exercitum erit quietus de custodia secundum quantitatem temporis quo per nos fuerit in exercitu.

XXIII. NULLUS vicecomes vel ballivus noster vel alius capiat equos vel carectas alicujus pro cariagio faciendo nisi reddat liberationem antiquitus statutam scilicet pro carecta ad duos equos decem denarios per diem et pro carecta ad tres equos quatuordecim denarios per diem.

XXIV. Nec nos nec ballivi nostri capimus alienum boscum ad castra vel alia agenda nostra nisi per voluntatem ipsius cujus boscus ille fuerit.

XXV. Nos non tenemus terras illorum qui convicti fuerint de felonis nisi per unum annum et unum diem et tunc reddantur terre dominis feodorum.

XXVI.

XXVI. ET omnes kydelli deportantur de cetero per totam AVENLICH et per totam HYBERNIAM nisi per costeram maris.

XXVII. BREVE quod vocatur precipe de cetero non fiat alicui de aliquo tenemento unde liber amittere possit curiam suam.

XXVIII. UNA mensura vini sit per totum regnum nostrum & una mensura cervisie et una mensura bladi scilicet quarterium DUBLIN' et una latitudo pannorum tinctorum russorum haubergettorum scilicet due ulne infra listas De ponderibus autem sit ut de mensuris.

XXIX. NICIL detur de cetero pro brevi inquisitionis de vita et membris sed gratis concedatur et non negetur.

XXX. SI aliquis teneat de nobis per feodi firmam vel focagium vel per burgagium et de alio terram teneat per servitium militare nec habebimus custodiam heredis nec terre sue que est de feodo alterius occasione illius feodi firme vel focagii vel burgagii nec habebimus custodiam illius feodi firme vel focagii vel burgagii nisi ipsa feodi firma debeat servitium militare. Nos non habebimus custodiam heredis vel terre alicujus quam tenet de alio per servitium militare occasione alicujus parve serjantie quam tenet de nobis per servitium reddendi nobis cultellos vel sagittas vel hujusmodi.

XXXI. NULLUS ballivus ponat de cetero aliquem ad legem simplici loquela sine testibus fidelibus ad hoc inductis.

XXXII. NULLUS liber homo capiatur vel imprisonetur vel dissiciatur aut utlegetur aut exulet aut aliquo alio modo destruaturs nec super eum ibimus nec super eum mittemus nisi per legale iudicium parium suorum vel per legem terre.

XXXIII. NULLI vendemus nulli negabimus aut differemus rectum aut justiciam.

XXXIV. OMNES mercatores nisi publice antea prohibiti fuerint habeant saluum et securum exire de HYBERNIA et venire in HYBERNIAM et morari et ire per HYBERNIAM tam per terras quam per aquas ad emendum et vendendum sine omnibus malis totis per antiquas et rectas consuetudines preterquam in tempore guerre et si sint de terra contra nos guerrina et si tales inveniuntur in terra nostra in principio guerre attachientur sine dampno corporum vel rerum donec sciatur a nobis vel a capitali justiciario nostro quomodo mercatores terre nostre tractentur que tunc inveniuntur in terra contra nos guerrina et si nostri salvi sint ibi alii salvi sint in terra nostra.

XXXV. Si quis tenuerit de aliqua escaeta sicut de honore Walingeford Notingham Bolon' Lancaster vel aliis escaetis que sunt in manu nostra et sunt baronie et obierit heres ejus non det aliud relevium nec faciat nobis aliud servitium quam faceret baroni si terra illa esset in manu baronis et nos eodem modo eam tenebimus quo baro eam tenuit.

XXXVI. HOMINES qui manent extra forestam non veniant de cetero coram justiciariis nostris de foresta per communes summonitiones nisi sint in placito vel plegia alicujus vel aliquorum qui attachiati sunt pro foresta.

XXXVII. OMNES homines qui fundaverint abbatias unde habent cartas regum Anglie vel antiquam tenuram habeant earum custodiam cum vacaverint sicut habere debent et sicut supra declaratum est.

XXXVIII. OMNES foreste que afforestate sunt tempore regis Johannis patris nostri statim deafforestentur.

restentur et ita fiat de gruariis que per eundem Johannem tempore suo positi sunt in defenso.

XXXIX. NULLUS capiatur vel imprisonetur propter appellum femine de morte alterius quam viri sui.

XL. OMNES autem istas consuetudines predictas et libertates quas concessimus in regno nostro tenendas quantum ad nos pertinet erga nostros omnes de regno nostro tam clerici quam laici conservent quantum ad se pertinet erga suos.

XLI. QUIA vero quedam capitula in priori carta continebantur que gravia et dubitabilia videbantur scilicet de scutagiis et auxiliis assidendis de debitis Judeorum et aliorum et de libertate exeundi de regno nostro et redeundi in regnum nostrum de forestis et forestariis de warrennis et warennariis de consuetudinibus comitatum et de ripariis et earum custodibus placuit suprascriptis prelati et magnatibus ea esse in respectu quousque plenius consilium habuerimus et tunc faciemus plenissime tam de his quam de aliis que occurrerint emendanda id quod ad communem omnium utilitatem pertinuerit et pacem et statum nostrum et regni nostri. Quia vero sigillum nondum habuimus presentem cartam sigillis venerabilis patris nostri domini Gualonis titulo sancti Martini presbyteri cardinalis apostolice sedis legati et Willielmi Mariscalli comitis Penbrok' rectoris nostri et regni nostri fecimus sigillari. Testibus omnibus prenominationis et alijs multis. Dat' per manum predictorum domini legati et Willielmi Mariscalli apud Bristollum duodecimo die Novembris anno regni nostri primo.

N U M B E R II.

SINCE this volume was sent to the press the following curious Record appeared in the *Calendar of Ancient Charters*. Though it varies in some instances from the MS. of the Bodleian Library, quoted in the reign of Edward the Third, yet it seems the completest and most authentic evidence of the fact as there stated. For the sake of those readers who may not have opportunity of recurring to it in the *Calendar*, &c. I have taken the liberty of annexing it to this volume.

MEMORANDA DE HIBERNIA.

ANNIS 49 & 50 E. III.

De personis ecclesiasticis per Episcopos & Clerum, ac personis laicis per Communes cujuslibet Comitatus, & per Cives & Burghenses cujuslibet Civitatis & Burgi in Hibernia, eligendis, & transmittendis in Angliam, versus dominum Regem, & Consilium suum, ubicunque fuerit, & protestatem sufficientem habentibus, pro prædictis Episcopis & Clero, Magnatibus cujuslibet comitatus, Civibus & Burghensibus cujuslibet Civitatis & Burgi, ad tractandum, consulendum & concordandum cum ipso Rege, & ejus Consilio, tam super gubernatione & defensione terræ Hiberniæ, quam super auxilio ibidem levando ad sustentacionem guerræ regis.

CUM EXCELLENTISSIMUS DOMINUS NOSTER, DOMINUS REX ANGLIÆ, nuper transmiserit Nicholaum de Dagworth militem,

tem, ad terram ipsius domini regis Hiberniæ, ad quædam negotia dicti domini regis, Prælati, Magnatibus, & Communibus dictæ terræ exponenda, prout idem Nicholaus per dictum dominum regem erat oneratus, prout in literis patentibus de Anglia inde confectis, & in cancellaria dicti domini regis in Hibernia irrotulatis, plenius continetur, ac idem Nicholaus, in Parlamento dicti domini regis apud Kilkennor. die Sabbatis, in octabis Sancti Michaelis, anno regni ejusdem domini regis quadragesimo nono ex causa prædicta summonito & tento, comparens, inter cetera, tam in dictis literis, quam in quadam indentura, per dictum Nicholaum in dicto Parlamento monstrata, & ibidem perlecta, & postmodum in cancellaria prædicta exhibita, contenta; Prelatis, Magnatibus, & Communibus ibidem tunc convocatis, articulos subscriptos exposuerit, videlicet, qualiter dictus dominus Rex, tam grandes sumptus & expensas super sustentatione guerræ in terra sua prædicta, pro salvatione & de defensione ejusdem, quales per antea fecit & apposuit, propter excessivam effusionem expensarum quas circa guerras suas aliunde ipsum facere oporteret, diutius non potuit sustinere, unde dictos Prelatos, Magnates & Communes diligenter excitando, quod ipsi, præmissis consideratis, ordinarent qualiter quilibet eorum juxta facultates suas, & status sui exigentiam, partem rationabilem hujusmodi sumptuum & expensarum, pro sustentatione guerræ regis in terra prædicta, ac salvatione, defensione, & gubernatione ejusdem terræ, valeret supportare: & cum Prelati, Magnates & Communes supradicti, super præmissis se excusaverint, videlicet, quod ipsi propter eorum insufficientiam & paupertatem, aliquam partem hujusmodi

hujusmodi sumptuum & expensarum tunc temporis non possent supportare ; eisdem Prelatos, Magnates & Communes, juxta vim & effectum indenturæ prædictæ, postmodum oneraverit, quod quilibet episcopus duas personas ecclesiasticas potestatem sufficientem pro se & clero suæ diocesis per literas procuratorias ab ipsis episcopo & clero, ac communes cujuslibet comitatus dictæ terræ, duas personas laicas potestatem sufficientem pro magnatibus & communibus ejusdem comitatus, ac cives & burgenfes cujuslibet civitatis & burgi ejusdem terræ, duos cives & duos burgenfes potestatem sufficientem pro se, civibus & burgenfibus civitatem & burgorum prædictorum habentes, versus dictum dominum regem in Anglia, ad tractandum, consulendum & concordandum cum dicto domino rege & ejus consilio, tam super gubernatione ejusdem terræ, quam super auxilio & sustentatione guerræ regis, ibidem transmitterent : cujus oneris prætextu, & etiam pro eo quod idem dominus rex literas suas de privato sigillo suo Willielmo de Wyndesore gubernatori & custodi dictæ terræ Hiberniæ, per dictum Nicholaum transmissit, mandando eidem gubernatori & custodi quod si dicti Prelati, Magnates & Communes, partem rationabilem hujusmodi sumptuum & expensarum super se assumere recusarent, tunc idem gubernator & custos, tantum faceret, quod quilibet episcopus, ac communes cujuslibet comitatus, ac cives & burgenfes cujuslibet civitatis & burgi terræ prædictæ, duas personas in forma prædicta transmitterent, prout in dictis literis de privato sigillo plenius poterit apparere ; de avisamento dicti gubernatoris & custodis, ac consilii dicti domini regis Hiberniæ, extitit concordatum, quod breviter
domini

domini regis Archiepiscopis, Episcopis, Vicecomitibus, Senescallis, Majoribus, Superioribus, & Præpositis, ac omnibus aliis ejusdem terræ, quorum interest, ad electionem hujusmodi duarum personarum, in Angliam in forma prædicta transmittendarum, faciendam, mandari deberent, ut idem dominus rex ac peritum consilium suum in Anglia, super electione prædicta & nominibus hujusmodi electorum, ac super effectu brevium prædictorum, & returnorum eorundem ad partes Angliæ transmittendis, plenius poterunt informari.

QUAE quidem brevia confecta, & dictis Archiepiscopis & aliis prædictis missa, & postea in dictam cancellariam returnata fuerunt, & ibidem remanent de recordo, quorum vero brevium & returnorum tenores sequuntur sub hac forma :

EDWARDUS Dei gratia rex Angliæ & Franciæ, & dominus Hiberniæ, venerabili in Christo patri M. eadem gratia Archiepiscopo Ardmachono salutem :

CUM alias oneravimus dilectum & fidelem nostrum Nicholaum Dagworth militem, nuncium nostrum versus terram nostram Hiberniæ per nos transmissum, quod ipse in quodam Parlamento in terra nostra prædicta, prætextu literarum nostrarum, dilecto & fideli nostro Willielmo de Wyndesore gubernatori & custodi dictæ terræ nostræ transmissarum, convocando, inter cætera in quadam indentura inter nos & dictum nuncium nostrum confecta, contenta, Prælati, Magnatibus, & Communibus terræ nostræ prædictæ, ad dictum Parliamentum comparentibus, exponi faceret, quod cum nos, tam excessivas & intolerabiles expensas, circa guerras nostras in terra nostra prædicta, pro salvatione & defensione ejusdem, quales ante hæc tempora apposuimus, propter maximam effusionem expen-

sarum

farum quas circa guerras nostras aliunde necessario nos apponere oportebit, de cætero supportare minime valeamus; iidem Prælati, Magnates & Communes et eorum quilibet, juxta facultates suas & status sui exigentiam, partem rationabilem hujusmodi expensarum, pro sustentatione guerræ nostræ ibidem, & salvatione terræ prædictæ, faciant supportare; & si iidem Prælati, Magnates & Communes partem rationabilem hujusmodi expensarum super se capere recusarent, tunc dictus nuncius noster ipsos ex parte nostra oneraret, quod quilibet Episcopus duas personas ecclesiasticas idoneas potestatem sufficientem pro se & clero suæ diocesis, per literas procuratorias ab ipsis episcopo & clero, ac communes cujuslibet comitatus dictæ terræ, duas personas laicas potestatem sufficientem tam pro seipsis, quam Magnatibus ejusdem comitatus, ac Cives & Burgenfes cujuslibet Civitatis & Burgi ejusdem terræ, duos Cives & duos Burgenfes potestatem sufficientem pro se, & Civibus & Burgenfibus civitatum & burgorum prædictorum habentes, versus nos & consilium nostrum in Anglia, ad tractandum, consulendum & concordandum nobiscum, tam super gubernatione dictæ terræ, quam pro auxilio & sustentatione guerræ nostræ ibidem transmitterent. Et licet idem nuncius noster, præmissa omnia & singula Prælati, Magnatibus & Communibus in Parlamento nostro apud Kilkenn. in octabis Sancti Michaelis proximis præteritis, ex causis præmissis summonito & tento, comparentibus, exposuerit, & ipsos in forma prædicta oneraverit; ipsi tamen se per eorum insufficientiam excusarunt, quod aliquam partem sumptuum & expensarum, pro guerris nostris ibidem manutendendis, ad præsens nequeant supportare: ob quod, hujusmodi

hujusmodi personas versus nos in Angliam, ex causis prædictis, in forma supradicta, transmitti volentes, vobis mandamus, quod convocato coram vobis Clero vestræ diocesis, duas personas ecclesiasticas hujusmodi potestatem pro vobis & dicto clero vestro optinentes, de assensu ejusdem cleri eligi, & coram nobis, & dicto consilio nostro in Anglia ad sumptus vestros, & dicti cleri vestri, citra quindenam purificationis beatæ Mariæ proximi futuræ, ubicunque tunc fuerimus in Anglia, ad tractandum, consulendum & concordandum, ut prædictum est, transmitti faciatis, nobis in cancellaria nostra Hiberniæ, de nominibus dictarum duarum personarum, sic per vos eligendarum, citra festum Sanctæ Katerniæ virginis proximi futuræ, ubicunque tunc fuerit sub sigillo vestro certificantes, hoc breve nobis tunc ibidem remittentes, & hoc sub pœna centum librarum, de vobis, & dicto clero vestro, ad opus nostrum levandarum, nullatenus omittatis.

TESTE Willielmo de Wyndesore gubernatore & custode terræ nostræ Hiberniæ, apud Kilkenn, xxv. die Octobris, anno regni nostri Angliæ quadragésimo nono, regni vero nostri Franciæ tricesimo sexto.

Cujus quidem brevis returni tenor talis est :

PRAETEXTU istius brevis, convocato coram nobis clero nostræ diocesis, de nostro communi consilio & assensu respondemus, quoad contenta in brevi huic cedulæ consuto, quod non tenemur juxta libertates, privilegia, jura, leges & consuetudines ecclesiæ, nec terræ Hiberniæ, aliquos de clero nostro eligere, nec mittere ad partes Angliæ, ad Parliamenta seu consilia in Anglia tenenda, tamen, ob reverentiam domini nostri regis Angliæ

VOER I.

G g

illustrissimi,

illustrissimi, & propter urgentissimam necessitatem dictæ terræ jam imminentem ad præsens, salvis nobis & terræ prædictæ Magnatibus & Communi-
bus, juribus, privilegiis, libertatibus, legibus, & consuetudinibus suis supradictis, concedimus domino Johanni Cusak & Willielmo Fitz-Adam clericis per nos electis, ad proficiscendum ad partes Angliæ, ibidem coram domino nostro rege comparend. plenam potestatem ad tractandum, consulendum & concordandum, super salvatione, defensione, & bona gubernatione terræ prædictæ. Except. tamen quod non concedimus prædictis nunciis seu electis nostris, potestatem concedendi aliqua onera seu subsidia super nos, seu clerum prædictum ad præsens, & hoc tam propter paupertatem nostram, & nostrorum dignitatum & beneficiorum exilitatem, quam propter misas, sumptus & expensas, quos quasi quotidie, tam in inveniend. homines ad arma hobelarios, & pedites, quam in aliis sumptibus & expensis, quos nos circa defensionem partium nostrarum, & dictæ terræ necessario apponere oportebit, quæ tamen, licet juxta nostrum ac Com. totius terræ prædictæ posse apponatur, non sufficient ad decimam partem sumptuum & expensarum, quæ circa guerras & resistantiam inimicorum domini nostri regis & nostrorum, ac defensionem terræ ejusdem apponi oportet, & ob causas prædictas, & alias per prædictos electos seu nuncios nostros prædictos, coram domino nostro rege in Angliâ declarandas, aliter ad præsens respondere non possumus.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur custodibus spirituat-
latis archiepiscopatus Dublin. sede vacante, mu-
tatis mutandis, sub eadem data.

TENOR returni predicti brevis sequitur sub hac
forma :

EXCELLENTISSIMO in Christo principi & domino
nostro, domino Edwardo Dei gratia illustri regi
Angliæ & Franciæ, & domino Hiberniæ, vestri
humilis & devoti Willelmus de Gaylee canonicus
ecclesiæ Sancti Patricii Dublin. & Johannes Fitz-
Elys archidiaconus Glydelacen. in eadem, custodes
spiritualitatis archiepiscopatus Dublin. sede vacante,
salutem in eo per quem reges regnant & principes
dominantur.

BREVE vestrum regium præsentibus annexum,
nuper nobis directum, cum omni honore recepimus.
Cujusquidem brevis virtute, super contentis
in eodem, convocavimus coram nobis clerum dioc.
Dublin. ac duas personas ecclesiasticas, videlicet
me Johannem Fitz-Elys antedictum, & dominum
Thomam Athelard vicarium de Donabate, potestatem
de qua in dicto brevi vestro fit mentio, plenam,
pro nobis & dicto clero optinentes, de assensu
eiusdem cleri eligimus, ad comparendum coram
vobis, & vestro consilio in Anglia, sumptibus
nostris & dicti cleri, citra quindenam purificationis
beatæ Mariæ proximæ futuram, ubicunque
tunc fueritis in Anglia, & ad tractandum, consulendum
& concordandum, super hiis de quibus in
dicto brevi vestro plenior fit mentio, de nominibus
vero dictarum personarum electarum cancellariam
vestram in Hibernia, citra diem in præfato brevi
vestro limitatum certificamus, breve vestrum regium
nobis directum remittentes, & sic mandatum
vestrum in dicto brevi vestro, adimplevimus cum
honore. Vestram excellentiam conservet Altissimus,
per tempora longa.

IN

IN cujus rei testimonium, sigillum, quo utimur in officio nostro, præsentibus est appensum.

DAT. Dublin. xii. die mensis Novembris, anno Domini millesimo trecentesimo septuagesimo quinto.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur archiepiscopo Cassellensi, vel ejus vicario generali ipso archiepiscopo in remotis agendo, mutatis mutandis, sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba :

CLERUS diocesis Cassellensis coram nobis vocatus, de ejusdem cleri unanimi assensu & nostro, elegit dominum Johannem Geffard, canonicum monasterii de Offeney, & rectorem ecclesiæ de Kiltewenan, Cassellensis diocesis, quia facultates dictæ diocesis non sufficiunt ad duos nuncios transmittend. qui Johannes habet potestatem ad tractandum, consulendum & concordandum, prout breve requirit ; salvis libertatibus ecclesiæ & liberis consuetudinibus terræ Hibernicane.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur archiepiscopo Tuamensi, qui nichil inde respondit.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur episcopo Miden, mutatis mutandis, sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba :

STEPHANUS episcopus Miden. dicit pro se & clero suo, quod, pro eo quod ipse concessit, pro se & clero suo, prædicto domino regi, in auxilium relevationis expensarum suarum faciend. super sustentatione guerrarum suarum Hiberniæ, in parlamento de quo in hoc brevi fit mentio, & per literas suas eidem domino regi & consilio suo in Anglia, per Nicholaum de Dagworth militem inde transmissas centum marcas, solvendas, prout in dicta

dicta concessione continetur, non tenetur aliquos nuncios eligere vel transmittere ad partes Angliæ, coram domino rege, prout istud breve requirit; tamen ob reverentiam domini regis prædicti, & urgentissimam necessitatem jam eminentem in terra prædicta, prædictus episcopus, magistrum Bartholomeum Dullard, rectorem ecclesiæ parochialis beatæ Mariæ de Drogheda, nuncium suum, ad informandum & consulendum prædictum dominum regem & consilium suum in Anglia, de & super statu & gubernatione terræ Hiberniæ, & remediis inde apponendis, salvis libertatibus & consuetudinibus terræ prædictæ, & ecclesiarum ejusdem, ordinandum, pro se & clero suo prædicto, cum sufficienti protestate transmittit.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur episcopo Daren' mutatis mutandis, sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba:

PRAETEXTU hujus brevis, convocato coram nobis clero nostræ diocesis, idem clerus noster una nobiscum, excepto domino priore hospitalis Sancti Johannis Jerosolime in Hibernia, qui, licet magnam partem ecclesiarum nostræ diocesis in proprios usus optineat, nobiscum & clero nostro supradicto in hujusmodi negotio concurrere renuit & recusavit, & quia idem dominus prior, auctoritate Apostolica a nostra jurisdictione penitus est exemptus, ipsum dominum priorem ad id faciendum compellere non poterimus, Willielmo White decano ecclesiæ nostræ cathedralis Daren' & Ricardo White rectori de Donaghda, per nos & dictum clerum nostrum communiter electis, plenam concessit potestatem, ad tractandum, informandum, consulendum & concordandum, cum domino nostro rege, & consilio suo,

suo, ubicunque fuerit in Anglia, ad diem in isto brevi contentum super statu, salvatione & gubernatione terræ suæ Hiberniæ supradictæ; sed ad ipsum clerum ulterius onerandum seu obligandum, aliquibus oneribus seu subsidiiis quam onerati sunt, nullo modo vult concedere potestatem, eo quod propter guerram inimicorum & rebellium domini nostri regis, & fidelis populi sui, in diocesi nostra Daren. supradicta, de die en diem quæ pro majori parte est distructa, & propter beneficiorum exilitatem, ac etiam paupertatem & inopiam cleri supradicti, alia quævis onera quam indies & communiter portat & sustinet, quæ grandia sunt & importabilia debeat sustinere, & supportare nequit quoquo modo, prout prædicti procuratores nostri, coram domino nostro rege & consilio suo in Anglia, si necesse fuerit, ad plenum declarare poterunt in eventa.

CONSILIME breve dirigitur episcopo Leighlynen, mutatis mutandis, sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba :

PRÆTEXTU hujus brevis, convocato clero nostræ diocesis infra scripti, & perlectis coram ipso omnibus, & singulis articulis in hoc brevi contentis, qui omnes & singuli de clero nostro antedicto unanimiter allegarunt, quod nulla persona ecclesiastica versus dominum regem & consilium suum Angliæ, super articulis prædictis, propter nostrorum & eorum insufficientiam, paupertatem, & inopiam, quas nos ipsi & communes dictæ diocesis, per destructiones, roberias, arisiones, & depredationes Hibernicorum inimicorum indies in . . . perpetratas ante hæc tempora, devenimus, citra quindenam purificationis beatæ Mariæ content,

tent. sumptibus nostris transmitti possit, prout hoc breve requirit, & maxime, eo quod in diocesi nostra prædicta, extra manus Hibernicorum inimicorum domini regis non sunt cultæ & manuoperatæ præter quatuordecim carucatæ terræ, quod allegat. extitisse in Parlamento ultimo tento apud Kilkenn. per nos & clerum nostrum, ac communitatem comitatûs Catherlagh. coram gubernatore, & Nicholao Dagworth milite infrascript. ac consilio domini regis, quarum decimam partem reputamus minus sufficientem pro sustentatione nostra.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur episcopo Ossorien, mutatis mutandis, sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba :

ALEXANDER episcopus Ossorien. & Johannes de Acres . . . electi sunt per dictum episcopum & clerum suæ diocesis, de essendo coram domino rege & ejus consilio in Anglia, ad diem in brevi contentum, ad faciendum prout breve requirit : salvis libertatibus & liberis consuetudinibus ecclesiæ terræ Hiberniæ.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur episcopo Lismoren. & Waterford. mutatis mutandis, sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur sub hac forma :

NOMINA duarum personarum ecclesiasticarum pro Thoma episcopo Lismoren. & Waterford. & clero suæ diocesis electarum, ad comparandum coram domino rege in Anglia, ad diem in hoc brevi contentum, ubicunque tunc fuerit in Anglia, potestatem pro ipsis episcopo & clero procurator. habentium, ad tractandum & consulendum cum ipso domino rege, & ad ipsum dominum regem informandum super articulis in hoc brevi contentis, videlicet

videlicet, Thomas Lismorem. & Waterforden, episcopus, & magister Philippus Raye clericus, absque aliqua potestate per ipsos episcopum & clerum, dictis personis concessa, ad concordandum in præmissis, ne libertates ecclesiæ terræ Hibernicæ infringantur, eo quod hujusmodi potestas concordandi, in maximum præjudicium ecclesiæ suæ, ac libertates ecclesiæ & terræ Hibernicæ, multum cedere posset, prout dictæ personæ coram ipso domino rege, si necesse fuerit, ad plenum delarabunt.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur episcopo Fernen. mutatis mutandis, sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur sub hac forma :

CLERUS diocesis nostræ Fernen. coram nobis convocatus, de ejus unanimi assensu & nostro, elegit magistrum Willielmum de Sancto Johanne decanum ecclesiæ nostræ Fernen. & Ricardum Whitty clericum, qui plenam potestatem habeant ad faciendum prout istud brevi requirit : salvis libertatibus ecclesiæ, & liberis consuetudinibus terræ Hiberniæ.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur episcopo Lymer. mutatis mutandis, sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur sub hac forma :

NOMINA duarum personarum idonearum pro episcopo & clero diocesis Lymer. electarum, ad tractandum, consulendum & concordandum, cum domino nostro rege, & ejus consilio, citra quindenam purificationis beatæ Mariæ prox. futur. ubicunque tunc fuerit in Anglia, prout istud breve requirit, magister Johannes Fox & Johannes Route clericus.

CONSIMILE

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur episcopo Lismorem. mutatis mutandis, sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba :

EXCELLENTISSIME domine, quoad duas personas ecclesiasticas per nos mittendas, cum sufficienti mandato versus Angliam, prout vestrum breve præsens requirit, nullo modo easdem personas mittere valemus, videlicet, propter notoriam & nimiam paupertatem nostram, ac cleri nostri, cum nullum clerum ad præsens habemus residentem, ratione continuæ guerræ & inextinguibilis in diocesi nostra existentis, exceptis paucis clericis pauperimis manentibus inter inimicos vestros & nostros ; mittemus tamen negotia nostra cum sufficiente potestate versus Angliam, prout continetur in præsentī mandato, per personas ecclesiasticas electas pro clero Lismoren.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur episcopo Cork. mutatis mutandis, sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba :

MAGISTER Thomas Rys & magister Johannes White clerici, ecclesiæ cathedralis Cork. canonici, sunt electi per G. episcopum Cork. & totum clerum ejusdem diocesis, de essendo coram domino nostro rege, & ejus consilio, ubicunque fuerit in Anglia ad diem in brevi prædicto contentum, ad tractandum, consulendum & concordandum, prout breve requirit.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur episcopo Clon. vel ejus vicario generali ipso episcopo in remotis agente, mutatis mutandis, sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba :

CLERUS diocesis Clonen. de assensu communi, elegit Thomam priorem Villæ Pontis & Johannem

Sandy capellanum, ad comparendum coram domino nostro rege in Anglia, citra quindenam purificationis beatæ Mariæ prox. futur. ubi tunc fuerit, ad tractandum, consulendum & corcordandum, una cum aliis procuratoribus electis provinciæ Cassellensis, prout idem breve requirit.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur episcopo Ker. mutatis mutandis, sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba:

CONVOCATO clero nostræ diocesis, electi sunt duo nuncii in Angliam, secundum tenorem brevis, videlicet, Magister Gilbertus . . . & Johannes filius Johannis, canonici cathedralis ecclesiæ nostræ, qui ibunt ad Angliam domino concedente.

REX vicecomiti Dublin. salutem :

CUM alias oneraverimus, dilectum & fidelem nostrum Nicholaum Dagworth militem, nuncium nostrum versus terram nostram Hiberniæ, &c. ut supra, usque ibi transmitti volentes, & tunc sic ; tibi præcipimus, quod convocatis coram te magnatibus & communibus comitatus tui, duas personas laicas, hujusmodi potestatem, tam pro se, quam dictis magnatibus & communibus optinentes, de eorum communi assensu, eligi, &c. ut supra, usque ibi remittent' & tunc sic, & hoc sub pœna centum marcarum, de te & communibus comitatus tui, ad opus nostrum levandarum, nullatenus omittatis. Teste, &c. ut supra.

CUJUSQUIDEM brevis returni tenor talis est:

NICHOLAUS Houth & Ricardus White electi sunt per magnates & communes comitatus Dublin. ad comparendum coram domino rege, & consilio suo in Angliam, citra quindenam purificationis beatæ Mariæ, unde istud breve facit mentionem, ubicunque

ubicunque tunc fuerit in Anglia, plenam potestatem, per prædictos magnates & communes habendos, ad tractandum & consulendum, cum ipso domino rege, & consilio suo, ibidem, ad ipsum dominum regem informandum, super statu & gubernatione terræ suæ Hiberniæ, absque aliqua potestate per prædictos magnates & communes, prædictis Nicholao & Ricardo concessa, concordand. prædictos magnates & communes, onerare de aliquibus oneribus super eis imposterum imponendis, propter diversa quæ per prædictos Nicholaum & Ricardum tunc ididem declarabuntur. Et super hoc, pro eo quod quamplures de sufficientibus hominibus comitatus Dublin. per quandam petitionem suam, sub eorum sigillis sigillatam, consign. gubernatori & custodi, ac cancellario, & aliis de consilio domini regis in Hibernia, monstrarunt & certificarunt, quod ipsi electioni dictorum Nicholai & Ricardi non consentierunt, quorum nomina in certificatione prædicta, præsentibus annexa, plenius inferuntur, de avisamento dictorum gubernatoris & consilii, adverten. qualiter discensio & variatio super electione prædicta intervenerunt, pro omni altercatione in ea parte amovenda, concordatum fuit, quod literæ domini regis patentes, sub magno sigillo suo quo utitur in Hibernia; fratri Thomæ Scurlak abbati domus sancti Thomæ Martiris juxta Dublin. thesaurario domini regis in Hibernia, & Roberto de Preston capitali justiciario de communi banco Hiberniæ, ad interessend. electioni in hac parte faciend. & ad eam supervidend. & de nominibus sic eligendorum; & si de communi assensu dictorum magnatum & commun. vel majoris partis eorundem electi fuerint, necne in cancellaria domini regis in Hibernia certificand. prout in literis

prædictis, præsentibus annexis, plenius continetur : ac breve dicti domini regis vicecomiti Dublin. de convocando dictos magnates & communes, in præsentia dictorum thesaurarii & justiciarii, ad electionem hujusmodi de eorum communi assensu faciend. & de nominibus sic eligendorum, in cancellariam prædictam certificand. prout in eodem brevi præsentibus similiter annexo, plenius poterit apparere, mandari deberent. Qui quidem thesaurarius & justiciarius, virtute dictarum literarum in dictam cancellariam returnarunt, quod viginti & quatuor personæ elegerunt Nicholaum Houth & Willielmum Fitz-William, & viginti personæ elegerunt prædictum Nicholaum, & Ricardum White, prout in returno inde præsentibus annexo, satis constat; ac dictus vicecomes returnavit, quod magnates & communes meliores dicti comitatus elegerunt prædictos Nicholaum & Ricardum & alios non tenentur eligere, prout in returno super dicto brevi confecto, & præsentibus annexo, plane liquet. Et quia visis returnis prædictis, præfatis gubernatori & consilio constabat, prædictos Nicholaum & Willielmum per majores & sufficientes dicti comitatus electos existere, iidem gubernator & consilium electionem dictorum Nicholai & Willielmi duxerunt acceptandam : et super hoc, de avisamento dictorum gubernatoris & consilii, aliæ literæ patentes ipsius domini regis, præfatis thesaurario & justiciario missæ fuerunt, continentes quod ipsi, omnes personas prædictas, una cum aliis magnatibus & communibus dicti comitatus, coram eis ac vicecomite vel coronatore comitatus prædicti venire facerent, ipsosque ad concedend. potestatem sufficientem, prædictis Nicholao & Willielmo, tam ad concordand. quam tractand. & consulend. compellerent :

compellerent: et de eo quod inde facerent, in cancellariam prædictam certificarent, prout in eisdem literis præsentibus annexis plenius poterit apparere; quarum quidem literarum returnum patet in quadam cedula eisdem literis consuta. Et pro eo, quod dicti magnates & communes, in disensione & altercatione, ut prædicitur, perseverant, ne negotia regia in hac parte expediend. propter hujusmodi singularum disensionem five altercationem, diutius retardentur, tam literæ & brevia prædicta, quam returna eorundem modis quibus fiunt, de avifamento dictorum gubernatoris & consilii, coram domino rege in Angliam transmittantur.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur vicecomiti Loueth. sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba:

PRÆTEXTU hujusmodi brevis, convocatis magnatibus & communibus comitatus Loueth. iidem magnates & communes de eorum communi assensu, una voce dixerunt, quod ipsi, juxta jura, privilegia, libertates, leges, & consuetudines terræ Hiberniæ, a tempore conquestus ejusdem & ante usitat. non tenentur eligere, nec mittere aliquos de terra prædicta, ad Parliamenta, nec consilia in Anglia tenend. ad tractand. consulend. & concordand. prout hoc breve requirit; tamen ob reverentiam domini nostri regis Angliæ, & propter urgentissimam necessitatem dictæ terræ, & populi fidelis ejusdem, ad præsens, salvis præfatis communibus juribus, privilegiis, libertatibus, legibus, & consuetudinibus prædictis, concedunt Rogero Gernon & Ricardo Verdon, per ipsos electis, ad transfretandum ad partes Angliæ, ibidem coram domino nostro

nostro rege comparand. plenam potestatem ad tractand. consulend. & concordand. super salvatione, defensione & bona gubernatione terræ prædictæ. Except. tamen, quod non concedunt præfatis Rogerò & Richardo, potestatem concedendi aliqua onera seu subsidia super ipsos ad præsens imponenda, propter paupertatem dictæ communitatis, & propter magnas expensas suas quas cotidie tam in inveniendis homines ad arma, hobelarios, & pedites, in defensione marchiarum dicti comitatus, erga fortiores Hibernicos, Hiberniæ inimicos, & rebelles domini nostri regis Angliæ, & propter illas causas & alias, quas prædicti Rogerus & Ricardus coram domino nostro rege & suo consilio in Anglia, declarabunt, aliter ad præsens respondere non possunt.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur vicecomiti Kildar. sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba :

PRÆTEXTU hujus brevis, convocatis magnatibus & communibus comitatus Kildar. iidem magnates & communes, &c. ut supra, usque ibi ; prout hoc breve requirit, & tunc sic ; ob reverentiam tamen domini nostri regis, & voluntatis suæ, ac mandatorum suorum complementum, ac propter urgentem necessitatem, pro ruina & inopia dictæ terræ, et populi fidelis ejusdem, domino regi declarand. hac vice, concedunt potestatem Johanni Rocheford & Petro Rowe, per ipsos magnates & communes electis, ad tractandum, consulendum & concordandum, cum ipso domino rege, super statu & gubernatione ejusdem terræ, absque aliqua potestate eisdem electis concessa, ad ipsos magnates & communes, erga dominum regem in aliquo onerand. Ita tamen quod dicta concessio five missio dictis

dictis magnatibus & communibus, in futuro, non cedat in prejudicium jurium, privilegiorum libertatum legum & consuetudinum prædictorum, quibus ipsi magnates & communes a tempore conquestus Hiberniæ inconcusse & inviolabiliter usi sunt & gavisi.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur vicecomiti Catherlagh. sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba:

PRÆTEXTU hujus brevis, convocatis coram me apud Cathirlagh. communibus comitatus Cath. & perlectis, coram ipsis, omnibus & singulis articulis in hoc brevi contentis, qui omnes & singuli coram me unanimiter allegarunt, quod nullam personam laicam, coram domino rege & consilio suo in Anglia, ad tractandum ibidem super articulis prædictis, propter eorum insufficientiam & inopiam, ac frequentes destructiones, roberias, & depredationes, quæ ante hæc tempora diversimode sustinuerunt & indies sustinent, per Hibernicos inimicos & rebelles domini nostri regis comitatus prædicti, dictum comitatum undique invadentes & destruentes, citra quindenam purificationis beatæ Mariæ in hoc brevi content. ad sumptus ipsius comitatus transmittere possunt; ac etiam, prædicta communitas coram me eorum sacramenta prestiterunt, quod non sunt cultæ & manuoperatæ in comitatu prædicto, in manibus ligeorum domini regis, præter quatuordecim carucatæ terræ, omnibus computatis, & quas quidem insufficientiam & inopiam, Galfridus de Valle & Phillipus de Valle milites, electi pro communitate comitatus prædicti ad comparandum in Parlamento tento apud Kilkenn. coram gubernatore domini regis Hiberniæ, ac cæteris de consilio
ibidem

ibidem in octab. sancti Michaelis prox' præterit', coram gubernatore, & Nicholao Dagworth milite infracripto, & dicto consilio allegand. protestan. quod personam coram domino rege . . dicto consilio suo in Anglia, ad sumptus dictæ communitatis, & causis præmissis, transmittere potuerunt.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur vicecomiti Waterford. sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba :

RICARDUS Botiller & David Cogan sunt electi de communi assensu comitatus Waterford. de essendo coram domino rege, & ejus consilio in Angliâ ad diem in brevi contentam, ad faciendum, prout breve requirit : salvis libertatibus, juribus & legibus, & consuetudinibus terræ Hiberniæ.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur vicecomiti Weyf. sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba :

NOMINA duarum personarum per magnates & communes comitatus Weyf. prætextu istius brevis electarum, ad faciendum, prout istud breve requirit, videlicet, Ricardus Whittey & Willielmus de Sancto Johanne, Clericus.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur vicecomiti Lymer. sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba :

HENRICUS Bercley & Thomas Kildare sunt electi, per magnates & communes comitatus Lymer. ad tranfretandum, versus dominum regem in Angliam, & consilium suum ibidem, ad tractandum, consulendum

consulendum & concordandum, super quibusdam negotiis statum & gubernationem terræ dicti domini regis Hiberniæ concernentibus, prout breve requirit.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur vicecomiti Cork, sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba :

RICARDUS de Wynchodon & Philippus filius Roberti White electi sunt, per magnates & communes comitatus Cork. ad faciendum & concordandum pro eis in Angliā, sumptibus eorum, prout breve requirit.

REX senescallo libertatis Mid. & vicecomiti Croc. ibidem salutem.

CUM alias oneraverimus, &c. ut supra, usque ibi transmitti volentes, & tunc sic, vobis mandamus, quod convocatis coram vobis magnatibus, & communibus comitatus Mid. duas personas laicas, &c. ut supra. Teste, ut supra.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba :

NOMINA duarum personarum laicarum per communitatem libertatis Mid. electarum, Willielmus de London' miles & Ricardus Plunket, ad comparandum coram domino rege, & consilio suo in Angliā, ad diem in isto brevi contentum, ubicunque fuerit in Angliā, plenam potestatem habentes, ad tractandum & consulendum, cum ipso domino rege ibidem, ad ipsum dominum regem informandum, super statu & gubernatione terræ suæ Hiberniæ, absque aliqua potestate per prædictam communitatem libertatis prædictæ, prædictis duabus personis concessa, de aliquibus oneribus super eis imposterum imponendis, propter diversa quæ per prædictos personas ibidem declarabitur.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur senescallo libertatis Kilkenn. & vicecomiti Croc. ibidem sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba :

ALEXANDER episcopus Ossor. & Galfridus Forstall electi sunt, per senescallum libertatis Kilkenn. vicecomitem Croc. ibidem, ac magnates, & communes ejusdem comitatus, de essendo pro eisdem, coram domino rege & ejus consilio, ubicunque tunc fuerit in Anglia, ad diem in brevi contentum, ad tractandum & consulendum, de negotiis, terram Hiberniæ, & dictum comitatum tangentibus : salvis libertatibus ac liberis consuetudinibus terræ Hiberniæ, ac comitatus prædicti, ita semper quod dicti Alexander & Galfridus, nec eorum aliquis, nullatenus potestatem habeant concordandi, ad aliqua onera super dictos senescallum, vicecomitem, magnates, seu communes imponenda, seu quovis modo recipienda.

ET postmodum, pro eo, quod dicti magnates & communes, non dederunt prædictis electis, potestatem concordandi, prout breve domini regis requirebat, & etiam pro eo, quod duæ laicæ personæ, & non aliqua ecclesiastica persona, ad transfretandum, pro dictis magnatibus & communibus versus partes Angliæ, juxta mandatum & voluntatem domini regis, extra Angliam eligi deberent, de avisamento gubernatoris & custodis terræ regis Hiberniæ, & consilii ibidem, per breve domini regis, sicut alias, præceptum fuit præfatis senescallo & vicecomiti, quod dictis magnatibus & communibus, ex parte domini regis injungerent, quod ipsi de eorum communi assensu eligerent unam laicam personam, loco dicti episcopi, habentem

tem sufficientem potestatem, una cum præfato Galfrido, tam ad concordandum quam tractandum & consulendum, ut prædictum est.

RETURNI cujus quidem brevis tenor talis est :

WALTERUS filius Willielmi Coterell de Kenlys, electus est loco Alexandri episcopi Ossor. una cum Galfrido Forstall, per senescallum libertatis Kilkenn. & vicecomitem Croc. ibidem ac magnates, & communes ejusdem comitatus, de essendo pro eisdem coram domino rege, & ejus consilio, ad diem in brevi contentum, ubicunque tunc fuerit in Anglia, ad tractandum consulendum & concordandum, de negotiis, terram Hiberniæ, & dictum comitatum tangentibus : salvis libertatibus & liberis consuetudinibus terræ & communitatis prædictorum ; & except. quod dicti Walterus & Galfridus, nec eorum aliquis, nullatenus potestatem habeant concordandi ad aliqua onera, super dictos magnates & communes imponenda, seu quovis modo recipienda.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur senescallo libertatis Tyar. & vicecomiti Croc. ibidem sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba :

WILLIELMUS Newebery & Willielmus Yong, sunt electi de communi assensu, tam libertatis, quam Croc. de essendo coram domino rege, & ejus consilio in Anglia, ad diem in brevi contentum, ad faciendum, prout breve requirit : salvis libertatibus, juribus, & legibus, & liberis consuetudinibus terræ Hiberniæ.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur senescallo libertatis Ker. & vicecomiti Croc. ibidem sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba :

GILBERTUS filius Walter. & Thomas Fitz-Daniell del Rath, laici. electi sunt per magnates

& cc

& communes comitatus Ker. tam pro libertate, quam pro Croc. de essendo coram consilio domini regis in quinden. purificationis beatæ Mariæ prox' futur', in Anglia, ad tractandum, consulendum & concordandum, prout breve requirit.

REX majori & ballivis civitatis suæ Dublin. salutem :

CUM alias oneraverimus, &c. ut supra, usque ibi transmitti volentes, & tunc sic ; vobis mandamus, quod convocatis coram vobis civibus & communibus ejusdem civitatis, duos cives hujusmodi potestatem, &c. ut supra, sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba :

PRÆTEXTU hujus brevis, convocatis civibus & communibus civitatis domini regis Dublin. iidem cives & communes, de eorum unanimi assensu, una voce dixerunt, quod ipsi juxta jura, privilegia, libertates, leges, & consuetudines terræ Hiberniæ, a tempore conquestus ejusdem usitata, non tenentur mittere aliquos de terra prædicta, ad Parliamenta nec consilia in Anglia tenta, nec ad tractandum, consulendum & concordandum, cum domino rege in Anglia, prout hoc breve requirit ; ob reverentiam tamen domini regis, & voluntatis suæ, ac mandatorum suorum complement. & propter urgentem necessitatem pro ruina & inopia dictæ terræ, & populi fidelis ejusdem, domino regi declarandum hac vice concedunt, Johanni Blackboyn & Johanni White civibus civitatis prædictæ, electis pro civitate prædicta, potestatem ad tractandum, consulendum & concordandum, cum domino rege, & consilio suo in Anglia, super statu & gubernatione ejusdem terræ Hiberniæ ; potestatem prædictoram Johannis & Johannis electorum ad ipsos cives

cives & communes, de aliquibus oneribus erga dominum regem onerandis, concedendis in omnibus reservat. Ita tamen quod dicta concessio sive missio, in futuro, dictis civibus & communibus non cedat in præjudicium jurium, privilegiorum, libertatum, legum & consuetudinum prædictorum quibus magnates & communes Hiberniæ, ac ipsi cives & communes civitatis prædictæ, a tempore conquestus Hiberniæ inconcussæ usi sunt & gavisi.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur majori, senescallo, & ballivis villæ suæ de Drogheda, ex utraque parte aquæ, &c. mutatis mutandis, sub eadem data.

TENOR returni prædicti sequitur in hæc verba :

PRÆTEXTU hujus brevis, convocatis burgensibus & communibus villæ de Drogheda ex utraque parte aquæ, iidem, &c. ut supra, usque ibi hac vice concedunt, & tunc sic potestatem Willielmo White & Nicholao Starkey electus pro villa prædicta, ad tractandum, &c. ut supra, mutatis mutandis.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur majori & ballivis civitatis suæ Waterford. mutatis mutandis, sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba :

PRÆTEXTU istius brevis, convocatis civibus & communibus civitatis domini regis Waterford. de communi assensu & consilio, respondemus quoad contenta in hoc brevi, quod non tenemur juxta libertates, privilegia, jura, leges & consuetudines civitatis prædictæ, nec terræ Hiberniæ, aliquos de civitate prædicta eligere, nec mittere ad partes Angliæ, ad Parliamenta seu consilio in Anglia tenenda ; tamen ob reverentiam domini nostri regis Angliæ illustrissimi, & propter urgentissimam necessitatem dictæ terræ jam imminentem, ad præsens ;

fens; falvis nobis, & terræ prædictæ magnatibus & communibus juribus, privilegiis, libertatibus, legibus & consuetudinibus suis prædictis, concedimus Willielmo Chaundhull & Galfrido Forstals, per nos electis, ad proficiscendum ad partes Angliæ ibidem coram domino nostro rege comparendi plenam potestatem, ad tractandum, consulendum & concordandum super salvatione & defensione & bona gubernatione dictæ civitatis ac terræ prædictæ; except. tamen quod non concedimus prædictis nunciis seu electis ejusdem civitatis, potestatem concedendi aliqua onera seu subsidia super eos seu cives & communes civitatis prædictæ ad præsens, & hoc tam propter paupertatem nostram, quam propter misas, & expensas, ac sumptus, quos quasi cotidie intallagiatos levand. de prædictis communibus dictæ civitatis quam in aliis sumptibus & expensis, quos circa defensionem civitatis prædictæ necessario apponere oportebit: quæ tamen, licet juxta civium ac communitatis totius civitatis prædicta posse apponantur, non sufficiunt ad decimam partem sumptus & expensarum, quæ, circa guerras ac resistantiam inimicorum & rebellium domini nostri regis, civium ac communitatis, & defensionem ejusdem civitatis, apponi oportet, & ob causas prædictas, & alias quamplurimas per prædictos electos seu nuncios civitatis prædictæ, coram domino nostro rege in Anglia declarandas aliter ad præsens respondere non possumus.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur majori & ballivis civitatis Lymer. sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur hæc in verba:

NOMINA duorum civium electorum, habentium sufficientem potestatem, tam pro se, quam pro civibus

civibus & communibus civitatis Lymer. ad tractandum, consulendum & concordandum, cum domino nostro rege, citra festum purificationis beatæ Mariæ prox' futur', ubicumque tunc fuerit in Anglia, prout istud breve requirit, videlicet Henricus Bercley & Thomas Kildare.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur majori & ballivis civitatis suæ Cork. sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba :

WILLIELMUS Dalton & Johannes Droupe sunt electi, de essendo coram domino rege, & consilio suo in Anglia, ad tractandum, consulendum & concordandum, prout breve requirit.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur superiori & præposito villæ de Kilkenn. &c. mutatis mutandis, ut supra, sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba :

ROBERTUS Flode & Johannes Ledred electi sunt, per superiorem præpositum, & burgenfes villæ Kilkenn. ad transfretandum versus dominum regem in Anglia & essend. coram dicto domino rege & consilio suo ibidem, ad diem in hoc brevi contentum, ad faciendum, prout breve requirit : salvis libertatibus & liberis consuetudinibus terræ Hiberniæ, & villæ prædictæ.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur superiori & ballivis villæ de Rosse sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba :

EXECUTIO istius brevis facta est in hac forma qua sequitur, videlicet :

WILLIELMUS Rykyll & Willielmus Seymor sunt duo electi, ad respondendum pro villa de Rosse, prout breve requirit.

CONSIMILE

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur superiori & ballivis villæ de Weys sub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti sequitur in hæc verba:

JACOBUS Freynsh & Laurentius Bron burgenſes villæ Weys electi ſunt, per ſuperiorem, ballivos & communitatem villæ Weys : qui quidem Jacobus & Laurentius poteſtatem habent, ad tractandum, conſulendum, & ordinandum, tam pro ſeiſiſ, quam communibus villæ prædictæ, & ad eſſendum coram dōmino rege & conſilio ſuo in Anglia, ubi-cunq; fuerit, citrà quindenam purificationis beatæ Mariæ, prout breve requirit.

CONSIMILE breve dirigitur superiori & ballivis villæ de Yoghill ſub eadem data.

TENOR returni brevis prædicti ſequitur in hæc verba:

VIRTUTE hujus mandati, eligi fecimus Bernardum Baret & Ricardum Criſtofre, plenam poteſtatem noſtram habentes, pro nobis & communitate villæ de Yoghill, ad tractandum, conſulendum, & concordandum, coram excellentiſſimo domino noſtro rege, & diſcretiſſimo conſilio ſuo Angliæ, ſecundum formam & tenorem hujus inſcripti mandati.

ET QUIA præfato gubernatori & cuſtodi, ac conſilio Hiberniæ prædicto videbatur majus autenticum eſſe, ad negotia prædicta verſus dominum regem, & dictum conſilium ſuum in Anglia, ſub mago ſigillo dicti domini regis in Hibernia, quam aliquo alio modo transmittend. de aviſamento & ordinatione dictorum gubernatoris & cuſtodis, ac conſilii regis in Hibernia, magnum ſigillum domini regis in Hibernia prædicta, præſentibus in præmiſſorum teſtimonium eſt appoſitum.

DAT. apud Caſſel. xx. die Martii, anno regni regis Edwardi Tertii, poſt conqueſtum regni ſui Angliæ quinquageſimo, & Franciæ triceſimo ſeptimo.

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